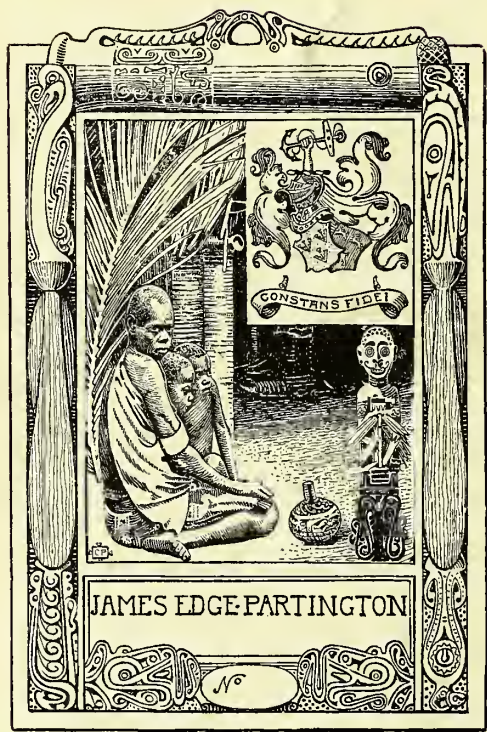


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COLONY OF FIJI.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE

DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION,

WITH

APPENDICES.



SUVA: EDWARD JOHN MARCH, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1896.

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ERRATA.

Page	13, paragraph	27 (11), line 2, for "virtues" read "powers."
"	13, "	27 (11), line 3, for "powers" read "virtues."
"	31, "	73, line 19, for "Nine" read "Niua."
"	33, "	85, line 4, for "general" read "germal."
"	34, footnote,	delete comma after "Chevalier."
"	36, paragraph 100, line 3,	delete "they."
"	37, "	103, for "bacteriæ" read "bacteria."
"	43, "	113, line 3, for "women" read "woman."
"	61, "	174 (1), for "induces" read "induce."
"	72, "	217, line 2, for "that" read "than."
"	76, "	236, line 5, for "infusion" read "infusoria."
"	102, "	299, line 21, for "decoction" read "infusion."
"	102, "	299, fourth line from bottom, for "attend" read "attended."
"	102, footnote,	for "by" read "in."
"	112, paragraph 329, for "XXXVIII" read "XXXIV."	
"	120, "	349, line 15, for "her" read "their."
"	142, "	415, line 7, for "occasionally" read "occasionally."
"	147, line 1, for "receding" read "recedence."	
"	150, last line,	delete "its."
"	151, last line,	for "easy" read "easily."
"	152, paragraph 442, last line but one,	delete "also."
"	155, line 24, for "deleterious" read "inefficacious."	
"	156, line 7, for "terseness" read "tenseness."	
"	159, twelfth line from bottom, for "sinuous" read "sanious."	
"	159, next line, for "dying" read "drying."	
"	160, paragraph 463, last line but two, and 473 (2) and (8),	for "sequellæ" read "sequelæe."
"	163, "	475, line 9, for "the" read "a."
"	175, "	506, line 4, for "election" read "selection."

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- II.—COMPARATIVE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE OFFSPRING OF ORTHOGAMOUS AND OTHER MARRIAGES.
- III.—CIRCULAR LETTER FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY INVITING OPINIONS OF COLONISTS.
- IV.—REPLIES TO THE CIRCULAR LETTER, INCLUDING THE TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT ON THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.



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Commission.



By His Excellency HENRY SPENCER BERKELEY, Esquire, Officer Administering
the Government of, and Commander-in-Chief in and over, the Colony of Fiji.

[L.S.] H. S. BERKELEY.

To

The Honourable BOLTON GLANVILL CORNEY, Chief Medical Officer.

JAMES STEWART, Esquire, Assistant Colonial Secretary.

BASIL HOME THOMSON, Esquire, Assistant Native Commissioner.

By virtue of the powers and authority in me vested by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, I do hereby constitute and appoint you the said BOLTON GLANVILL CORNEY, JAMES STEWART, and BASIL HOME THOMSON, to be a Commission to inquire into and report to me upon the causes suggested for the Decrease in the Native Population and the remedies proposed for checking such decrease in the replies to the Colonial Secretary's Circular of 30th December, 1891, and generally to report upon the causes which in the opinion of the Commission have led and still lead to a decrease of the Native population, and what remedies can be applied to check the decrease.

Given at Suva this sixteenth day of March, A.D. 1893.

By Command,

JAMES STEWART,

Assistant Colonial Secretary.

COLONY OF FIJI.

DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.

(REPORT OF THE COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO.)

*To His Excellency Sir John Bates Thurston, K.C.M.G.,
Governor of Fiji, &c., &c.*

Suva, 19th July, 1893.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

1. The Commission appointed by Your Excellency to—

- (1) Inquire into, and report upon, the causes suggested for the Decrease in the Native Population, and the remedies proposed for checking such decrease, in the Replies to the Colonial Secretary's Circular* of the 30th December, 1891; and
- (2) Generally to report upon the causes which, in the opinion of the Commission, have led, and still lead, to a decrease of the population, and what remedies can be applied to check the decrease

have agreed to the following Report, which is now respectfully submitted for Your Excellency's consideration.

2. In the course of our inquiry we have examined seventeen Native Fijian witnesses, three Gilbert Islanders, two Rotumans, three Samoans, one Native of Futuna, two Tongans, two Solomon Islanders, two Banks' Islanders, and one Tamil; making in all a total of thirty-three persons, besides others whom we have interrogated incidentally.

We have had the advantage of the services of the Medical Staff of the Hospital for the purpose of making certain analytical experiments, to which we shall hereafter refer.

We should, perhaps, mention that during the course of this inquiry we have had to carry on the work of the several Departments with which we are officially connected. We have, therefore, been compelled to repeatedly lay aside the work of the Commission to make way for pressing duties of current routine. Had it been possible to relieve us of those duties, we should have been in a position to present our Report at an earlier date.

Preliminary.

3. Before proceeding to discuss in detail the two questions which Your Excellency has been pleased to remit for our consideration, we deem it well to set forth the opinions that have been put on record by early observers as to the number and density of the population of the Fiji Group.

4.

PRELIMINARY.

* *Vide* Appendix IV.

4. These observations are, in the nature of things, only approximate estimates, but they will serve as a stand-point from which the subsequent decrease in the number of the people may be best surveyed :—

- (1) M. Gaimard, who visited the Group with M. d'Urville in the French ship of war "l'Astrolabe," in 1827, estimated the population at 70,000. He reckoned the population of Vitilevu as 20,000, and that of Vanualevu as 10,000.
- (2) Commodore Wilkes, of the United States Navy, who spent over three months in the Group in 1840, estimated the population at 133,500.
- (3) The Rev. John Williams, writing about 1835, says, "The Fiji is an extensive group, said to comprise from 100 to 200 islands, which vary in size from 5 to 500 miles in circumference, all teeming with inhabitants in the most degraded and wretched state of barbarism."

This statement, which probably reflected the information obtained by Mr. Williams from visitors to the Group, indicates a density of population considerably greater than that now existing, which is equal to about fifteen per square mile.

- (4) The Rev. John Hunt, writing in 1844, estimated the population of Vitilevu at 100,000, and thought it probable that the total population of the Group was 300,000.
- (5) The Rev. Walter Lawry, in 1847, reckoned the population of Vitilevu and Vanualevu at 150,000, and quoted Mr. Hunt as thinking that the other islands contained a population of 150,000, making altogether 300,000 souls in Fiji. Mr. Lawry also says, "I am well satisfied that twenty times the present number of people might easily find subsistence on these islands and 100 islets not now inhabited."

In an Appendix to the same work, published in 1850, it is stated: "The population of these islands has been estimated at 300,000. This computation proceeds, however, upon the supposition that the interior of the islands is thickly inhabited, which seems doubtful. There are circumstances which appear to warrant the supposition that the number of the population does not much exceed 200,000."

- (6) Captain Erskine, R.N., (1849,) did not commit himself to an estimate, but remarked the discrepancy between Commodore Wilkes' estimate of 133,500, "whilst the missionaries, whose means of gaining information are daily becoming better, insist that the islands do not contain fewer than 200,000, and that probably 300,000 souls is not an over-estimate."
- (7) The Rev. Thomas Williams ("Fiji and the Fijians"), writing prior to 1858, estimated the native population of the Group at 150,000, rejecting Commodore Wilkes' estimate as somewhat too low, and the larger estimates as being too high. Mr. Williams, moreover, appeared to have made the number of the population a subject of personal observation and inquiry. He adds, "Both on the coast and inland the population has diminished within the last fifty years, probably one-third, and in some districts as much as one-half. The chiefs do not migrate, as it is said was formerly the custom with the Hawaiians, so that every town ruined in war is a proof of a minished population. Another strong evidence is the large quantity of waste ground which was once under cultivation—more than can be accounted for on the principle of native agriculture. Except where the smaller islands have been entirely depopulated, the larger ones show the clearest signs of decrease in the number of inhabitants—a decrease which has been very great within the memory of men now living, and the causes of which, beyond doubt, have been war and the murderous customs of heathenism."

- (8) Admiral Washington, R.N., reporting to the Board of Admiralty in 1859, states, "The whole population of the Group may be 200,000."
- (9) Colonel Smythe, R.A., reporting to the Colonial Office in May, 1861, as to the expediency of accepting the offer made to cede the sovereignty of the islands to Her Majesty, stated that the population is estimated at 200,000; and Dr. Seemann, speaking of the same time, gives the number of Christian converts, according to returns, as 67,489.
- (10) Mr. Consul Pritchard, referring to the year 1862, speaks of "swaying the 250,000 natives of Fiji in the interests of civilisation."
- (11) Mr. Frederick J. Moss, at one time a planter in Fiji, states, in his sketch "Through Atolls and Islands of the Great South Sea," that in 1868 the native population of Fiji numbered 140,000.
- (12) Other estimates give the population in 1868 as 170,000, and in 1874 as 140,000.
- (13) At the date of Cession (1875) the population was officially estimated at 150,000.

PRELIMINARY.

Early Estimates of Population.

5. The following figures, which are more specific than any of the foregoing estimates, are taken from Findlay's "Directory for the Navigation of the South Pacific," second edition, published in 1863. The figures there given for the population of the various islands have been obtained in most instances from navigators and visitors to the Group—Wilkes and others—and in some cases from statistics furnished by the Wesleyan Mission.

The population of the respective islands as ascertained at the Census of 1891 is also given for comparison:—

Island.	Population from Findlay's Directory, 1863.	Population by Statistics, 1891.
Vulaga	150	414
Oneata	200	133
Lakeba	1,000	969
Nayau	299	240
Cicia... ..	300	371
Munia... ..	80	Now owned by Europeans.
Susui	150	64
Vanuabalavu	1,000	With Mago, 1,271
Kanacea	300	Now owned by Europeans.
Yacata	20	107
Taviuni (Wilkes' estimate)	7,000	2,171
Koro	2,000	1,340
Nairai (in 1856—Mission estimate)	1,162	502
Gau (in 1856—Mission statistics)	3,173	1,755
Batiki	509	318
Moala	700	743
Totoya	400	606
Matuku (Denham's estimate, in 1856)	600	644
Waya (Yasawa)	3,000	647
Viwa (Yasawa)	50	249
Vanualevu (d'Urville)	10,000	18,748
„ (Rev. J. Williams, in 1849)	10,000 to 12,000	
„ (Mr. Bensusan, in 1860)	20,000	
(It has been estimated at two or three times this number.)		
Vitilevu (M. Gaimard in "l'Astrolabe," in 1827)	20,000	68,513
„ (Wilkes)	88,000	
Kadavu (Wilkes said that it consisted of 45 villages)	2,000	80 villages, 6,895

It has of course to be borne in mind that some islands were sold to Europeans before the Cession of the Colony, and that the natives of these islands were removed to, and are now included in the census of, other islands.

PRELIMINARY.
—
Early
Estimates of
Population.

6. The only reliable figures in the first column of the foregoing Table are those for Nairai, Gau, and Batiki; and for purposes of comparison the population of these islands, as ascertained at the Census of 1881, is also given hereunder:—

	Findlay's Directory.	Census, 1881.	Census, 1891.
Nairai (1856)	1,162	555	502
Gau	3,173	2,020	1,755
Batiki	509	359	318
Totals	4,844	2,934	2,575
Decrease from 1856 to 1881	1,910	or 39·4 per cent.	
Decrease from 1856 to 1891	2,269	or 46·8 per cent.	
Decrease between 1881 and 1891	359	or 12·2 per cent.	

The rate of decrease was much higher between 1856 and 1881 than during the decade ending in 1891; but the epidemic of Measles in 1874-5 is responsible for a great portion of the decrease that occurred in the former period.

7. As bearing further on this point, we would respectfully refer Your Excellency to pages 81-2 of the printed replies to the Colonial Secretary's Circular, where it is stated by Mr. Wilkinson that between the years 1865 and 1871 a decrease of over 8,000 took place in the province of Bua alone. Mr. Wilkinson states that in 1865 he took the census of the province of Bua as then existing, the population being—

Bua (present Province)	29,000	Dreketi (in Macuata), Uninhabited owing to war.	Yasawa,	Total.
At the Census of 1879 the numbers were 6,408		1,039	2,950	10,397
„ 1881 „ 6,640		990	2,962	10,592
„ 1891 „ 5,399		720	3,166	9,285

Mr. Wilkinson declares that during the six years that succeeded the date of his first census in 1865 the population of about 40,000 had decreased by about one-fifth, and further estimates that by the date of Cession—1875—it had decreased by one-half. This decrease, it will be seen, is believed to have occurred within a period of ten years.

By the year 1879, when the first enumeration was taken by the Colonial Government, the population of the districts that constituted the old State of Bua had, if Mr. Wilkinson's figures be correct, decreased by nearly three-fourths. Mr. Wilkinson further believes that the decrease in the province of Bua was not exceptional. During the succeeding two years there was a tendency towards increase, the net increase on the remaining population of 10,397 amounting to 195. In the decade from April, 1881, to April, 1891 (assuming both enumerations to be correct), there was a decrease—

In the province of Bua of 1,241;

In the district of Dreketi of 270;

and an increase in the province of Yasawa of 204; giving a net decrease in the old State of Bua of 1,207 during the decade, being equal to 11·4 per cent.

8. One point may be worthy of mention in connection with these various estimates of the population of the Fiji Group. The earliest—that of M. Gaimard—is the lowest (70,000). The estimate on which most care appears to have been bestowed is that of Commodore Wilkes (133,500). This estimate is next to M. Gaimard's both in point of date and in point of number; but it is stated that Commodore Wilkes proceeded on the hypothesis that the interior of the larger islands was very sparsely populated, estimating the population of the inland districts of Vitilevu

Vitilevu at 5,000. The estimate of the Rev. Thomas Williams (150,000), made in 1858, is also the opinion of a careful observer, who had special facilities for the work. His estimate is but a little higher than that of Commodore Wilkes, and, in making it, he appears to have qualified Wilkes' estimate of the inland population of the larger islands by his own observations.

PRELIMINARY.
—
Early
Estimates of
Population.

Mr. Williams was for some years a missionary at Bua, and he is said to have estimated the population of Vanualevu in 1849 at from 10,000 to 12,000. This estimate is much short of the census taken by Mr. Wilkinson fifteen years later, when he found the population of Bua alone, comprising about one-third of the island of Vanualevu, to be 29,000.

9. There must have been a time when the natives of Fiji increased, but nothing definitely is known of that period of their history. Various views are given as to the point at which their decrease began. Beginning of
the Decrease.

It is pointed out by the writer of paper No. 11, that so far back as the date of Captain Cook's visit to the South Seas—one hundred and twenty years ago—the belief was held that the Eastern Polynesians were past their prime, and that the signs of decrease were apparent; but of this stock the population of Fiji contains only a slight admixture except in the provinces of Lau, Lomaiviti, Cakaudrove, Bua, Macuata, and Rewa (six of the sixteen provinces into which the Colony is divided). The process by which the loss of population is brought about distinctly varies in the Polynesian and Fijian races. Among the Polynesians it is mainly owing to a low birth-rate, but among the Fijians the birth-rate is high, although it is unfortunately exceeded by an enormous death-rate, due chiefly to the heavy mortality among the infant population. The opinion is generally expressed that the decay of the Fijian race preceded the arrival of Europeans in the Group, that it might have gone on for generations without being observed by the natives themselves, and that it had often been remarked by the early missionaries and "old hands" that "the people were fast dying off."

10. The major causes cited as contributing to the decay of the race are:—

- (1) Want of stamina, the result of inbreeding or consanguinity brought about by the isolation of the various tribes.
- (2) The practice of Polygamy.
- (3) Incessant wars, consequent burning of towns and destruction of food, cannibalism, and general disregard of human life which are said to have been responsible for 75 per cent. of the deaths prior to 1871. It is contended that the same natural causes that are now at work operated then in addition to many fearful ones that have been suppressed since the advent of Christian Missions to Fiji.

On the other hand it is feared that, though the great infant mortality began before the arrival of Christianity in 1835, it has since then been increasing, even lately during the years of British rule.

11. By other writers it is indicated—

- (1) That at no very remote date the Group was thickly populated;
- (2) That for the past thirty years there have been a combination of new causes at work replacing the old ones of war and massacre;
- (3) That the decadence of the race is mainly attributable to the causes arising out of the abolition of polygamy on the introduction of Christianity.

12. Coming down to more specific detail, it is mentioned by Mr. Carew that an epidemic known as *Lila* ("wasting of the body"), the symptoms of which were extreme weakness, diarrhoea, dysentery, and general atrophy, ending usually in death after the lapse of a few days, visited Fiji in the end of the last or the beginning of the present century, and swept off many thousands. He believes that the population had gone on increasing up to the advent of the *lila*, and commenced decreasing from then.

Our own inquiries satisfy us that the Group has been visited by three epidemics before the more recent one of Measles. Two of these epidemics appear to have

PRELIMINARY.
Beginning of
the Decrease.

have been at least as fatal as that of Measles, which carried off probably twenty-eight per cent.—or rather more than one-fourth—of the population existing in the year 1875.

We shall examine hereafter the traditions that deal with the nature and extent of these visitations.

13. In view of these facts it may at least be safely concluded that since the beginning of the present century the native population of Fiji has been decreasing.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
The population returned at the Census of 1879 was	59,993	51,931	111,924
The population returned at the Census of 1881 was	60,899	53,849	114,748
Indicated Increase	906	1,918	2,824
The population returned at the Census of 1891 was	56,445	49,355	105,800
Indicating a Decrease during the decade of	4,454	4,494	8,948
But the decrease ascertained by registration of births and deaths during the decade was	2,655	1,947	4,602

14. Proceeding now to a specific analysis of the causes assigned by the various correspondents for the continued decrease of the population, we have found it convenient to adopt the following classification:—

CAUSES.

Predisposing Causes tending to the Degeneracy of the People as a race.

- i. Polygamy.
- ii. Consanguineous marriage.
- iii. Epidemic diseases.
- iv. Condition of women.
- v. Communal system, with attendant customs of *lala* (tribute and service to chiefs and communes), *kerekere* (mutual appropriation of property), *bose* (councils), and *solevu* (festivals).
- vi. Sexual depravity.
- vii. Premature civilisation.
- viii. Want of virility.
- ix. Mental apathy, laziness, improvidence, and lack of ambition.

Causes more immediately affecting the Welfare and Stamina of the People individually.

- x. Quality and supply of food and drinking-water.
- xi. Clothing.
- xii. Insanitary dwellings, and domestic habits.
- xiii. Decentralisation.
- xiv. Native taxation system.
- xv. Diseases of children tending to permanently injure health.
- xvi. Abuse of *yagona* and tobacco.
- xvii. Lack of discipline.
- xviii. Treatment of sick persons.
- xix. Irregularity of living.
- xx. Obstacles to marriage.
- xxi. Penal laws against fornication.
- xxii. Abortion, feticide, and prevention of conception.

Causes immediately affecting the Unborn Child.

- xxiii. Physical conditions affecting fecundity, and diseases of gestation.
- xxiv. Work during pregnancy.
- xxv. Fishing by child-bearing women.
- xxvi. Unskilled midwifery.

Causes

Classification
of Assigned
Causes of
the Decrease.

Causes affecting the Infant.

PRELIMINARY.

Classification
of Assigned
Causes of
the Decrease.

xxvii. Neglect of children by reason of the parents' work and absence from home—

- (a) Taking children with them;
- (b) Leaving children improperly tended.

xxviii. Lactation.

xxix. Cohabitation of parents during the suckling period (*dabe*).

xxx. Inadequate care about the period of dentition.

xxxi. Infants' food.

xxxii. Bowel diseases.

xxxiii. Yaws (*coko*).

xxxiv. Native medical treatment and nursing.

xxxv. Domestic dirt.

xxxvi. General insouciance of the native mind, heedlessness of mothers, and weakness of maternal instinct.

15. The following is a classified list of the remedies proposed by the various correspondents to be applied to meet the causes assigned for the decrease. They may be more conveniently discussed in conjunction with the consideration of the causes to which they severally relate:—

PROPOSED REMEDIES.

Classification
of Proposed
Remedies.*Tutelar.*

- i. Institution of village crèches.
- ii. Institution of inquests on infantile deaths.
- iii. Improvement in the dietary of infants.
- iv. Encouragement to the use of cows' or goats' milk.
- v. Circulation of instructions in nursing.
- vi. Institution of rewards for large families.
- vii. Prevention of the neglect of children.
- viii. Encouragement of games.
- ix. Promotion of measures for the avoidance of yaws.

Marital.

- x. Miscegenation.
- xi. Facilitation of marriages.

Domestic.

- xii. Improvement of the condition of women.
- xiii. Better care of pregnant, lying-in, and suckling women.
- xiv. Hygienic mission by European women.

Alimentary.

- xv. Greater attention to food production and garnering.
- xvi. Prevention of the waste of food.
- xvii. Change of, and improvement in, the food staple.
- xviii. Attention to the sources of water-supply.

Clinical.

- xix. Provision of diet for invalids.
- xx. Medical care and nursing.

Disciplinary.

- xxi. Education, and moral training.
- xxii. Regularity of living.
- xxiii. More steady work.

Social.

Social.

xxiv. Subversion of the communal system.

xxv. Creation of incentives to industry, stimulus to exertion, and motives for thrift.

Moral.

xxvi. More effective deterrents against criminal abortion.

xxvii. Relaxation of the laws against fornication and adultery.

xxviii. Restraint of the prevalent "immorality."

Administrative and Sanitary.

xxix. Inculcation of sanitary principles.

xxx. Improved sanitation of villages and dwellings.

xxxi. Improved village administration.

xxxii. Concentration of villages.

xxxiii. Establishment of model villages.

xxxiv. Employment of European officers instead of native chiefs.

xxxv. More efficient administration of native laws.

Political.

xxxvi. Elective Legislature.

CAUSES.

16. We will now discuss the causes assigned for the decrease in the order of the foregoing classification.

POLYGAMY.

Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

I.—POLYGAMY.

Digest of Replies.

17. Polygamy is regarded by writers on the subject of the Decrease of the Native Population from two opposite points of view. Some regard Polygamy as the origin of the decrease, and others attribute the decrease to the abolition of that institution.

18. Four writers indicate as the primary cause the circumstances arising out of the abolition of polygamy on the introduction of Christianity, and four others cite that event, but only as a minor cause. These circumstances are variously indicated as follows:—

- (1) Increased work by the women, since one wife has now to do the whole of the work that in polygamous times was divided amongst a number, and is moreover compelled to continue working until within a day or two of her confinement; and having now no one to assist her in her household duties the mother exerts herself before she has properly recovered her strength, thus rendering herself unable to suckle her child which consequently dies. When she enters the married state her duties as a worker prevent her from performing those of a mother.
- (2) The more frequent bearing of children by the women.
- (3) That the mother is not so well cared for as under the old régime when she was allowed four years to nurse her child, and was relieved during that period of all domestic duties beyond nursing the infant, a system which placed the mother in the best possible position to rear her child. Monogamy prevents this, and the injurious nature of the change is emphasised by the fact that the Fijian has no passable substitute for mother's milk.
- (4) Increased laziness of the husbands consequent on their not being so well tended by one wife as by several, or owing to the natural tendency of low-class men, free from control, to treat their wife as a slave, doing no work themselves, and throwing the burden of food-providing on the women.

- (5.) That women have now to rely when in "travail to the good offices of some old woman instead of being, as formerly, well looked after by the other female members of household who took as much interest in the unborn babe as the mother herself."
- (6) That in polygamous times the best females of the race bore children to the best males, and the progeny was consequently robust: but that many of such women are now the wives of an inferior class of men, who under a polygamous régime would probably never have obtained wives, and would thus have been prevented from procreating their inferior species.
- (7) That in polygamous times the wives from a spirit of emulation tried to rear their children, and succeeded in doing so; and that it was not at all uncommon in those days for a man to rear ten or twelve children.
- (8) That the people who practised polygamy,—the chiefs,—were better able to maintain their wives in food and comforts than the men of lower rank who form the majority of monogamous husbands.
- (9) That on the abolition of polygamy the young girls were set free from the repression formerly exercised over them, and converted their new freedom into license, a change which has borne fruit in the present age in the form of sexual irregularities and dislike for marriage; and that, when they enter that state, their duties as workers prevent their performing those of mothers.

POLYGAMY.
—
Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

Official opinions are also cited to the further effect that—

"Monogamy has increased the work of the women. They did not perhaps like all things connected with a state of Polygamy, but on the whole I believe they like the incessant work entailed by monogamic life still less. * * * *

"The law, and that which Mr. Blyth a little oddly describes as 'Missionary monogamy,' has altered this state of things.

"The wife has now to work at all times for her husband. She has, so she says, no rest; and that which she hates still more than work, is the advances of her spouse whether while 'enceinte' or nursing.

"The man abhors being tied to one woman, who, in conformity with native ideas, is at times unclean, no less than she does. To both parties the idea is as repugnant as it can possibly be conceived. If the man's advances are, however, persistent, the woman neglects her child, and says the husband 'is killing it.'"

19. Opinions vary regarding the possibility of reintroducing the system of polygamy. One writer would gladly see it reintroduced if it were feasible, which he fears it is not; and two regard its reintroduction as beyond the range of possibility.

20. On the other side of this controversy two correspondents hold the opinion that "monogamy" has not the remotest connection with the continued decrease of the population, and one adds that polygamy was one of the undoubted factors in causing the degeneracy of the race by extending the evils of breeding in-and-in, and that its continuance would have hastened the depopulation of the islands. Another writer dismisses the popular panacea of the resumption of polygamy as impracticable, and thinks it, as practised in Fiji, to be a state under which no race could expect to survive. Successful polygamy presupposes a large excess of females, whilst in Fiji the males greatly exceed the females in number. One writer considers that polygamy was the cause of the origin of the decrease owing to the custom of abortion practised by the women in order that they might retain the favour of the polygamous chiefs. Another writer mentions that the wives of chiefs belonging to the principal families of allied districts usually brought in their retinue practitioners skilled in procuring abortion, who had secret instructions to prevent the birth of *vasu* (i.e., nephews to the mother's tribe, who by native custom were entitled to appropriate to their own use any of the property of their maternal relations that they might desire to possess),—a fashion that would certainly not tend in the direction of increase.

Minute

POLYGAMY.

Minute by the
Commission.

Minute by the Commission.

21. On this subject we think that those missionaries who lived in Fiji before the abolition of polygamy, who saw its actual working, and who have expressed their views on this subject, should be heard.

The following extract is from the writings of the Reverend Thomas Williams ("Fiji and the Fijians," vol. i):—

"Polygamy is looked upon as a principal source of a Chief's power and wealth. It certainly is the source of female degradation, domestic misery, and personal suffering."

After giving some instances of cruelty and abortion resulting from Polygamy, he proceeds,—

"The testimony of a woman who lived two years in my family after having been one among several of a Chief's wives, is that they know nothing of comfort. Contentions among them are endless, the bitterest hatred common, and mutual cursing and recrimination of daily occurrence. When their quarters become untenable they generally run. Indeed, I was told by a chief lady that it was a settled point that an offensive under-wife must be made to fly by abundant scolding and abuse. When a woman happens to be under the displeasure of her master, as well as that of his lady wives, they irritate the Chief by detailing her misdemeanours, until permission is gained to punish the delinquent, when the women of the house, high and low, fall upon her, cuffing, kicking, scratching, and even trampling on the poor creature so unmercifully as to leave her half dead.

"Another and most heavy curse of Polygamy falls on the children, since it is an institution which virtually dissolves the ties of relationship and makes optional the discharge of duties which nature, reason, and religion render imperative. Hence there are multitudes of children in Fiji who are wholly uncared for by their parents: and I have noticed cases beyond number where natural affection was wanting on both sides. The Fijian child is utterly deprived of that wholesome and necessary discipline which consists of regular and ever-repeated acts of correction and teaching."

The Rev. James Calvert states with regard to this subject,—

"Among the directions given by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society to its Missionaries is found the following:—'No man living in a state of Polygamy is to be admitted a member, or even on trial, who will not consent to live with one woman as his wife, to whom you shall join him in matrimony, or ascertain that this rite has been performed by some other minister; and the same rule is to be applied in the same manner to a woman proposing to become a member of society.' To this rule the Missionaries strictly adhered. Any man having more than one wife who offered himself as a candidate for membership was required to select one to whom he should be duly and religiously married, and reject all the rest. In some establishments, of course, such a change was of great importance, and considerable difficulties seemed in the way. It is these difficulties that have made some, even in high ecclesiastical position, plead for the toleration of Polygamy in the case of those who are converted while living in its practice. But these difficulties have always been found to give way before a clear assertion of the right and unbending exaction of its observance.

"The practice in question is 'Only evil continually.' It is discountenanced and condemned by Holy Scripture. It forms an unfailing source of domestic misery, family quarrels, and civil war. It dooms the children to neglect, and teaches them little but to hate the other children of the same father. Without fear or favour, therefore, the Missionaries in all cases enforced their rule in this matter, and found that here as elsewhere difficulties yielded to the firm maintenance of right principle. The ultimate injury done to the dismissed wives is not so great as it appears to those at a distance. It must be remembered that their position, with the exception of that of the chief lady, was merely one of concubinage, in which they were always exposed to the capricious tyranny of their lord and the more malicious despotism of the favourite wife, while among themselves perpetual jealousies made peace impossible. Another important fact must be borne in mind. Polygamy is actually confined to comparatively few. It is only the wealthy and powerful who can afford to maintain such an expensive indulgence. Hence there are always to be found husbands for the discarded women, who 'go off' the more readily for the prestige of having belonged to a high-rank house."

It is worthy of note that the missionaries did not peremptorily forbid the practice of polygamy, but merely invested it with a disability for church membership. This alone sufficed to abolish the custom.

22. We observe that in South Africa, which may be regarded as one of the strongholds of polygamy, the Commission appointed by the Governor of Cape Colony in 1882 to inquire into various Native Customs expressed an opinion adverse to the practice of polygamy; and, although the Commissioners did not advise the immediate suppression of the practice, they recommended that restrictions in the form of disabilities should be drawn around it with a view to its gradual suppression.

Polygamy

Polygamy there, however, appears to have been more general than among the Fijians, and the evils attributed to it were:—

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- (1) Idleness on the part of the men, whom it unfits for work.
- (2) Enforced work by the women.
- (3) Immorality—especially in the case of an old man with young wives.
- (4) Absorption of females who would otherwise be the wives of poorer men.
- (5) Unwilling union of young girls to old men.
- (6) Strife and jealousy among the wives leading to the practice of witchcraft.
- (7) Sale of girls as wives.

The general argument used there in favour of polygamy was that it is a provision against old age, since the children of the young wives will maintain the parents when the children of the first wives are gone.

23. We do not ourselves regard the abolition of the practice of polygamy in Fiji as seriously affecting the question of the decrease of the population. The evidence we have taken on the subject tends to show that while a few of the higher chiefs numbered their wives by tens, if they could number them at all, the bulk of the men who entered the connubial relation had to be satisfied with one wife. The petty chiefs and chiefs of septs had generally two wives, but they formed so small a proportion of the population that their sudden restriction to monogamy could have had no effect upon the race as a whole. This view was confirmed by the Rev. James Calvert in the passage quoted above. It does not appear, moreover, that any class was distinctly debarred from marrying; indeed, the man who was unable to obtain a wife seems to have been the exception. Then, as now, practically all the women were appropriated. As it is certain that the females did not exceed the males, and in view of the custom of female infanticide* more than likely that the males were then, as now, in excess, it stands to reason that, if polygamy was practised at all generally, a large number of males would have had to go without wives altogether—a state of things that could not have been advantageous. The early travellers and residents in the Group, being brought more into contact with the chiefs than with the commoners, would be inclined to describe the state of things they saw in the chief's house as being a practice extending to the common people.

24. The Colonial Government determined to make no sudden change at the time of Annexation. After the heathen outbreak in 1876 it was found that a number of the older chiefs in the mountain districts had two or more wives. The legality of each of these wives was recognised, and the limitation of monogamy applied only to persons marrying after the passing of the Native Regulation on the subject.† A number of these polygamists still survive.

25. We are of opinion that polygamy has, perhaps, left a legacy of customs which grew naturally out of that practice, and which assort badly with our modern form of civilisation; and we believe that the food staples of the people and their habits as regards the work of the women were more suited to the polygamous state of the race than to that now existing; but we think that the time has come when these habits should be remodelled to suit the altered conditions of native life, and that the abolition of polygamy is not a matter for regret.

II.—CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE.

Digest of Replies.

CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE.

Digest of Replies to Circular.

26. Some of the correspondents who regard inbreeding as the principal cause of the decrease of the native population appear to hold that opinion more positively and exclusively than do the advocates of the other theories advanced. One writer says:—

“I say emphatically no connection between white contact, quâ contact, can be made out, and further that neither European disease, European vice, clothes, food, firearms, prostitution, foeticide, monogamy,

* “Fiji and the Fijians,” p. 181.

† Regulation No. 12 of 1877 provides that—“All marriages performed and confirmed according to Fijian customs before the passing of this Regulation” shall be legal and binding.

monogamy, rum, nor true religion, either separately or all together, all of which have been warmly upheld by various persons as undoubted factors in the evil, do really affect it in the least."

Another paper (No. 19) says :—

"In regard to the causes assigned by native and other authorities, mentioned in Mr. Stewart's Minute, page 32, for the great infantile death-rate during the past years, I wholly dissent. A mother may forget her child, but surely the mothers of the whole Fijian race have not descended so low. Isolated instances of neglect may occur as in all countries, but to say that they wish to have no children; that they lack a mother's pride in them; that they despise the weak child; that they go to work in their gardens leaving their children behind in the village without food or care; that others take them to the plantations in the cold and wet, are gross calumnies, in support of which I do not see the slightest evidence. The women work no harder than they did formerly. But what about Tonga! where the women do no work at all, like the Rotumahans already mentioned, and yet are disappearing fast; and no such reasons as above stated are or can be assigned. * * * * *

I am quite convinced that the Government policy has not the remotest connection with the continual decrease of the population; nor the so-called missionary monogamy; nor in mothers having children in too quick succession (*dabe*); nor in their contact with the white race. This, I consider, a popular fallacy, having no evidence to support it beyond the mere fact that on becoming acquainted with them the whites find they are decreasing. I agree with Mr. Fison that the Fijians were decreasing in numbers before the earliest white settlers came among them, and for the reasons I have stated, only the ratio of decrease has considerably augmented since then.

On looking over the Blue Books in reference to the Fiji natives, I fail to detect the least glimmer of suspicion on the part of any person connected with the Native Department or of the High Officials, that the true cause is, what I have ventured to point out in this communication. They have all been groping in the dark for causes, while they missed the true cause though as clear as the noon-day sun."

27. Thirteen of the sixty-five correspondents who have replied to the Colonial Secretary's Circular, consider that inbreeding is one, if not the prime, cause of the decrease of the population. The views held by these writers may be arranged as follows :—

- (1) That the relationship of one class of cousins to another proves the existence of a former state of constant intermarriage among members of a tribe,—even of a family.
- (2) That universal and long continued near-breeding was the principal if not the sole cause of the decrease of the people, arising from the segregation of the various tribes who, before the era of the larger confederations, each lived within itself shut out from exterior influence.
- (3) That savage groups which are generally small—and among insular communities necessarily so—forbid accretions from without, and consequently practice near-breeding with disastrous results. That these results are generally modified by remedies such as a classificatory system of relationship or marriage by capture, which go some length towards restoring sound-breeding, but that the community sooner or later comes to a pass where no expedient at its command can counteract the effects of consanguineous marriage.
- (4) That since the Cession the tribes have been kept apart even more strictly than before by the establishment of "home districts," and the enactment of measures prohibiting natives from living beyond their own district. That the area for selecting partners is more circumscribed than it was formerly and that this limitation is increasing.

That in Fiji the intercourse necessary to facilitate unions between natives of different districts does not exist.

That the people of each district, frequently of the same village, often even of the same family, marry among themselves almost exclusively, rarely selecting a partner from another district, or, doing so only because the couple are in some way related.

That it is difficult for a man to obtain a wife from a strange village as he will be opposed by the whole community.

That most marriages are arranged by the relations, and that the present marriage laws, which require the consent of several persons to every marriage, favour this state of things.

- (5) That marriages are often prevented by friends on the ground that the bride or bridegroom belongs to a tribe into which it has not been customary to marry.

- (6) That out of ten couples in every village nine will be found to be natives of it, and related.

[Our statistics do not corroborate this statement. The proportion of marriages of persons of different towns is about 25 per centum.]

- (7) The effects of inbreeding are—

(a) Increasing frailty of offspring, degradation of stamina and vitality, and consequent heavy infant mortality ;

(b) Prevalence of hereditary diseases such as scrofula and perhaps leprosy ;

(c) Progressive diminution of fecundity ;

(d) General decay of the race.

- (8) That man, as a mammalian animal, is subject to the laws that regulate the production and perpetuation of other mammalia, and that the principles that guide the stock-breeder in arriving at a desired result cannot be disregarded with impunity among human animals.

- (9) That “in-and-in breeding” renders the progeny short-lived and impotent for the purposes of perpetuation, and that vitality is more readily weakened by a course of inbreeding than reinforced by “out-and-out breeding.” That were the cause to be removed it would be a question whether there would still remain sufficient strength in the race to make a start towards recovery.

- (10) That the fitness for existence on the part of a race consists in its inherent power of adaptability which will enable it to first endure a change of circumstances and then profit by it. That this quality is much greater among civilised than among savage men.

- (11) That evolution affects both mental and bodily characteristics, that the process of development evolves first the ~~virtues~~ and then the ~~virtues~~ powers, while the process of deterioration evolves first the vices and then the weaknesses ; that the virtues thus come last and go first. That all dominant peoples, “while climbing to dominion, and really dominant, seem to have possessed in greater or less degree the virtues of chastity, love of home and its duties, courage, pugnacity, endurance, reverence, and faith ;” while in the ease of those who have fallen from dominion it “was invariably the vices of lust, hatred of home and its duties, cowardice, tameness, indolence, irreverence, and unbelief which first announced their crisis, accompanied their rapid deterioration, and finally dug their graves.” *Ergo*, it is assumed, the Fijians have passed their crisis.

powers

- (12) That, having passed his crisis, the Fijian has lost his adaptability, and has been unable to profit by the measures taken and changes introduced with a view to his progress ; and that he is consequently incapable of working out his own redemption except by having the remedy forced upon him.

- (13) That the great reproductive powers of the American negroes are due to the fact that, after having been torn from half the continent of Africa, the survivors were thoroughly “crossed.”

- (14) That the half-caste children in Fiji, living under the same conditions as natives, are more healthy than native children, and survive ; vitality transmitted by a mixture of blood carries them through the sicknesses of youth.

[In contradiction of this view it is to be noted that the progeny of white men with Fijian women are often more tainted with scrofula than are pure natives, and that the mixed progeny of Tongans and Fijians are more scrofulous still.]

- (15) That in the dependency of Rotuma (the population of which numbers some 2,200 souls belonging to the pure Polynesian family) the extinction of the people from inbreeding is imminent; that nearly every person on the island is more or less related, and that in the district of Itumutu, where there is a large percentage of Line Island blood, the people are of a finer class and there is a lower infantile mortality; that one-half of the Rotumans are affected with scrofula, principally the women.
- (16) That, in Fiji, women were generally killed in war instead of being taken alive as in other savage countries, a circumstance which would tend to prevent the practice of exogamy.

28. Several writers point out that there were some limitations to an universal system of inbreeding, viz. :—

- (1) That during peaceful eras of past times even commoners may have obtained wives from distant places.
- (2) That in war times the captives would, for the most part, fall to the chiefs and their retinues; consequently that chiefs are less affected by inbreeding than are commoners and are of superior physique.

[We may here remark that in Fiji, as elsewhere, there has been more inbreeding among chiefs than among commoners. Chiefs systematically married their near relations with the view of keeping the blood pure.]

- (3) That war also gave rise to license and rapine, and spoiled many women for child-bearing. This would lead to the purchase of wives from near neighbours.

29. There is a direct conflict of opinion regarding the extent of the practice at the present day. While one writer says that inbreeding is probably more practised now than in the past, another declares that more marriages are now contracted with members of other tribes than was formerly the case, but that there is still far too small an introduction of new blood to rehabilitate the race.

Digest of Native Evidence.

30. Where matters of popular belief are concerned, it is always difficult to say how far a native's opinion expresses his own actual views, or to what extent it is coloured by the ideas of Europeans which the native retails as being possibly more acceptable or more enlightened than his own. The more intelligent the witness is, the more likely is he to have imbibed, and to give expression to, views which are but the reflection of European ideas. In dealing with native witnesses we have kept this in mind. We have always endeavoured to obtain the actual native view of the question, though we may not in every case have succeeded.

We have been informed by certain native witnesses that, although Fijians did not formerly believe that consanguineous marriage was harmful, they readily grasped the belief on having their attention called to it by Europeans.

It is also stated that natives have observed that women who come from a distance have stronger families than those who belong to the same town as their husband. This was not generally known of old, but they now begin to recognise it. In some places they also say that those families are strongest who can trace an ancestress who has come from a distance in old times; and that the families who are dying out in their towns are those who have continually married within themselves. We have also heard that on Vanualevu the families of the *yalewa ni lawa*—women who were obtained from other districts by a species of marriage by capture—were more robust than those of others.

31. We have elicited from the native witnesses the following opinions with respect to marriage customs :—

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- (1) That the marriage of *Veidavolani** is becoming less frequent.
- (2) That in the old days a woman could be taken by force by her male *davola*. This, of course, the law now prevents by making her consent necessary to marriage.
- (3) That the marriage of *veidavolani* is generally regarded as an insipid union, and is not much sought after because of the species of obligation attached to it. A man does not care for his wife if she be his *davola*.
- (4) That if *veidavolani* do not marry they generally have illicit intercourse together. That in such cases, if the girl is single, the man is not taken to Court unless he behaves badly to her relatives. They regard this offence on the part of *veidavolani* lightly, saying—"What does it matter; she was his natural wife."
- (5) That adultery is of frequent occurrence between *veidavolani*.
- (6) They have a saying at Bau when married people do not agree together, "Of course they do not: they are *veidavolani*."
- (7) That when the male *davola* marries some one else the female *davola* is still free to come and ask for (which practically means take) any of his personal property.
- (8) That the natives regard scrofula as hereditary, but do not connect it with consanguineous marriage.
- (9) That in giving women to be wives, villages and tribes keep count against each other in most parts of the Colony. They will sometimes say,—“Here is one of our women dead, and now they want another,” and insist upon keeping the account evenly balanced.
- (10) Matakalis do not like, and will if possible prevent, the intermarriage of one of their people with one of a tribe with whom in ancient times their fathers were at enmity. In such cases the individuals generally elope as they are not permitted to marry and live together.
- (11) Marriages are often prevented because families dislike each other, or because the people have no traditional connection, *e.g.*, a Verata man might not marry a Bau woman. A Verata man could only marry a Namena woman if they were related through a *vasu*. They might otherwise marry only if living away from their own home.
- (12) That many natives believe it to be a bad thing for husband and wife to be *dra vata* (literally, of the same blood) but that the custom is so old that they cannot alter it.

32. In the Gilbert Group, which has acquired notoriety for the speed with which its population doubles itself, the marriage of cousins is forbidden throughout all their generations. The inhabitants of this group, who in this part of the world are commonly known as “Tokalau” (the native name of the group appears to be “Tokarau”) are Polynesians with possibly a Mongolian strain, the predominating features of language and custom being, however, Polynesian. One of our Tokalau witnesses informed us that she had heard from her elders that they noticed in the old times that in certain places where cousins intermarried the children could not be reared, but died in infancy.

Minute by the Commission.

Minute by the
Commission.

33. We have made extended inquiry into the marriage customs, and find that the peculiar practice of cognate marriage does certainly tend to foster the system known to pastoralists as in-and-in breeding.

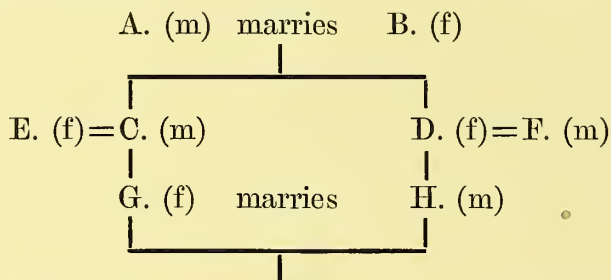
The Fijian system of relationship belongs to what has been called the Turanian order, which regards consanguinity from a point of view that is difficult for an European to seize. With us it depends solely upon the kinship of the parents :

* Orthogamous cousins.

parents: the term "brother" or "sister" can only be applied to the children of the same parents; the term "cousin" to the offspring of parents more or less closely related, irrespective of sex: but the Fijian bases his distinction upon the sex rather than the degree of kinship of the respective parents. Their word denoting brother and sister includes first cousins whose respective fathers were brothers, or whose respective mothers were sisters. The intermarriage of such cousins is as rigidly interdicted as if they were actually brother and sister, for they regard the degree of consanguinity in the two relationships as the same.* Thus far, then, their forbidden degrees are more numerous than ours, for, although we usually discountenance the marriage of first cousins, yet such marriages are not interdicted.

34. But in the case of cousins whose parents respectively were brother and sister the Fijians see a wide difference. The opposition of sex in the parents not only breaks down the barrier of consanguinity but even constitutes the children of the one the marital complement of those of the other. The Fijian word denoting this relationship is *veidavolani*,† a term that may literally be translated as "concupitous," but which we shall for convenience refer to as "orthogamous cousin," implying a right of cohabitation on the part of the male. The young Fijian is from his birth regarded as the natural husband of the daughters of his father's sister, and of his mother's brother.‡ The girls could exercise no choice; they were born the property of their male orthogamous cousin if he desired to take them.

35. This custom, if generally followed, would enclose the blood of each family within itself, and obstruct the influx of a new strain. At every third generation the natural tendency towards the renovation of the blood would be checked, and its stagnation be continued; thus:—



36. To understand the development of this custom it is necessary to use the Fijian names for the relationships, since there is no exact English equivalent for them.

There are, it may be said, two systems of kinship nomenclature current among Fijians§, one indicating consanguinity, and one kinship in relation to marriage. This latter system radiates from the central idea of orthogamy, and it is with this system that for the present we have to deal.

Veiganeni signifies the relationship of a male and female of the same generation between whom marriage is forbidden, *i.e.*, brother and sister, both real and artificial;

Veidavolani

* Not only is the kinship between such first cousins (as we term that relationship) the same as between brothers or sisters, but the father's brother and mother's sister share with the father and mother an almost equal degree of paternity. Thus a man or woman referring to his or her father's brother calls him *tamaqu* (my father)—and if he is asked, "*Tamamu dina?*" (Your real father?) he will answer, "*A tamaqu lailai* (My little father)." The same remark applies to the mother's sister.

† *Veidavolani* is the reciprocal form of the word *davola* to which the possessive pronoun is suffixed.

‡ The choice is more often exercised over the female children of the mother's brother,—the household to which the son is *vasu*. The *vasu* (nephew), as we have explained elsewhere, enjoys greater consideration than the sons and daughters of the family. The rule in the native's mind is that his wife should come from his mother's people. In fact the selection was generally made by the mother.

§ One indicates consanguinity, and includes the words:—

Tama—Father, or paternal uncle;

Tina—Mother, or maternal aunt;

Tuaka—Elder brother, sister, or cousin (not orthogamous):

Taci—Younger brother, sister, or cousin-german (not orthogamous);

Luve—Child;

Tuka—Grandfather;

Bu—Grandmother;

Veidavolani is applied to a male and female of the same generation between whom marriage is right and even obligatory (orthogamous).

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MARRIAGE.

Between related persons of different generations marriage is, in theory at least, prohibited under any circumstances.

Minute by the
Commission.

The fundamental rule that governs the system is as follows:—The children of *veidavolani*, if of opposite sex, are *veiganeni*, and the children of *veiganeni* are *veidavolani*. So strong is the sense of the obligation that binds *veidavolani* to marry, that, even if they each marry persons in no way related to them, their children will still be *veiganeni*, and regarded as being as closely consanguineous as if they had been really brother and sister born of the same parents. The male *davolana* may have so far evaded his natural obligations as to neglect his proper wife, but nevertheless he cannot escape from the paternity of her offspring, nor she from the maternity of his, at least in so far as the kinship of their children is concerned.

The converse of the above rule is as rigidly followed. These *veiganeni*, second cousins in reality, but brother and sister from the Fijian point of view, each marry. Their children, if of opposite sexes, become *veidavolani*, and are under an obligation to intermarry, provided the female has not been already appropriated, because, though they are in reality third cousins, they are in theory the children of a brother and sister respectively. The alternation between the prohibited and orthogamous degrees of kindred would be continued until the original tie was forgotten, but in practice one or other of the children would marry his *davolana* in a collateral branch nearer to him in kin, and a new starting-point would thus be formed.

37. We have now to consider in what other ways the relationship of *veidavolani*, entailing obligatory marriage, may be established. A man who is *veidavolani* with his first cousin necessarily stands in that relation to all her sisters; and, by a natural evolution of this idea, if he marry a woman unrelated to him, she would *ipso facto* become *veidavolani* with him, and he would be the natural husband of all her sisters. In the same way a woman and her sisters become *veidavolani* with all her husband's brothers, and upon his death she passes naturally to her eldest brother-in-law if he care to take her. This does not imply community among the brothers, but rather what is known to anthropologists as Levirate, the woman's marriage to her brother-in-law being contingent upon her husband's death. Her children by her husband are *veiganeni* with the children of all her brothers-in-law, and the grandchildren *veidavolani*.

38. The term *veidavolani*, as already stated, implies a right or obligation to intermarry, and is, therefore, confined to persons of opposite sex. There are special terms to denote persons of the same sex who would have been bound to marry had they been male and female.

Two males in this relation are called *veitavaleni*; two females, *veidauveni*. Had they been male and female they would have intermarried, and their children would have been *veiganeni*; but being of the same sex the system has been, as it were, defrauded of a marriage, and compensation is made by making their children orthogamous (*veidavolani*).

Veitavaleni.

Makubu—Grandchild;
Tubu—Great-grandparent.

The other indicates kinship in relation to marriage, and includes:—

Gane (reciprocal form, *Veiganeni*)—The relationship of a male and female of the same generation between whom marriage is forbidden, i.e., brother and sister, both real and artificial;

Davola (reciprocal form *Veidavolani*)—The relationship of a male and female of the same generation between whom marriage is right, and even obligatory, consequently sister-in-law;

Tavale (reciprocal form, *Veitavaleni*)—Male cousins who would be orthogamous if one were a female, consequently a man's brother-in-law;

Dauve (reciprocal form, *Veidauveni*)—Female cousins who would be orthogamous if one were a male, consequently a woman's sister-in-law;

Vugo—Nephew, i.e., son of a man's sister or woman's brother, also son-in-law or daughter-in-law,—also used reciprocally;

Gadina—Maternal uncle or father-in-law; vocative form, in the case of father-in-law, is *gadi* or *momo*;

Ganeitama—Paternal aunt or mother-in-law; vocative form, in the case of mother-in-law, is *ganei*.

Besides these there are compound names for some of the more remote relationships, and names for certain connections, such as *karua* (i.e., the second, reciprocal form *veikarua*), used of wives of a bigamous household, and also of children of the same father by different mothers.

*Veitavale*ni includes a man's brothers-in-law, and *veidavuni* a woman's sisters-in-law, upon the assumption that had they been of the other sex they would have been *veidavolani*.

The system extends even to the earlier generation. A man may marry a woman unrelated to him: his father-in-law becomes forthwith his uncle (*gadinana*), for by the fact of marriage he has constituted his wife *veidavolani* with him, and this entails the fiction that her father was *veiganeni* (brother) to his mother, and therefore his uncle.

39. To illustrate this aspect of the marriage customs we have prepared two Tables (A and B), which give the relationships of the chief family of Bau through Cakobau, the *Tui Viti*. In a family of sixteen persons the *veidavolani* relation occurs no less than twelve times, and this proportion is still further increased when it is remembered that each member of the family stands in similar relations with other persons of the collateral branches who are not included in the tables.

It must not be understood from the use of the word "obligatory" that a woman who was *veidavolani* with several males practised polyandry, or that in the days of polygamy a man necessarily received into his harem all the females who stood in that relation with him. The relationship seems to carry with it propriety rather than obligation. *Veidavolani* are born husband and wife, and the system assumes that no individual preference could hereafter destroy that relation; but the obligation does no more than limit the choice of a mate to one or other of the females who are *veidavolani* with the man who desires to marry. It is thus true that in theory the field of choice is very large, for the *veidavolani* relation might include third or even fifth cousins, but in practice the tendency is to marry the *davolana* who is next in degree,—generally a first cousin—the daughter of a maternal uncle.

40. The system just described was practised, we believe, generally throughout the Group, with the following exceptions:—

In the province of Namosi the descendants of two brothers or of two sisters are regarded as *veiganeni* throughout as many generations as their parentage can be remembered, and are strictly forbidden to intermarry. The children of *veidavolani* who have neglected to intermarry do not, as in Bau, become *veiganeni*, but are made to repair their parents' default by themselves becoming *veidavolani*.

In Lau, Cakaudrove, and the greater portion of Vanualevu, the offspring of a brother and sister respectively do not become *veidavolani* until the second generation. In the first generation they are called *veiganeni*, but marriage is not actually prohibited. The children of two brothers or of two sisters are, as in Bau, strictly forbidden to intermarry.

41. Inquiries we have made among the natives of Samoa, Futuna, Rotuma, Uea, and Malanta (Solomon Group), have satisfied us that the practice of orthogamous marriage is unknown in those islands; indeed, in Samoa and Rotuma, not only is the marriage of cousins-german forbidden, but the descendants of a brother and a sister respectively, who in Fiji would be expected to marry, are there regarded as being within the forbidden degrees as long as their common origin can be remembered. This rule is also recognised throughout the Gilbert Islands, with the exception of Apemama and Makin, and is there only violated by the high chiefs. In Tonga, it is true, a trace of the custom can be detected. The union of the grandchildren (and occasionally even of the children) of a brother and a sister is there regarded as a fit and proper custom for the superior chiefs, but not for the common people. In Tonga, other things being equal, a sister's children rank above a brother's, and therefore the *veidavolani* rights were vested in the sister's grandchild, more especially if a female. Her parents might send for her male cousin to be her *takaifala* (lit: "bed-maker") or consort. The practice was never, however, sufficiently general to be called a national custom. So startling a variation from the practice of the other Polynesian races may be accounted for by the suggestion that the chiefs—more autocratic in Tonga than elsewhere—having founded their authority upon the fiction of their descent from the gods, were driven to keep it by intermarriage among themselves, lest in contaminating their blood by alliance with their

TABLE A.
(For Relationships see Table B.)

THE CHIEF FAMILY OF BAU.

Ratu VISAWAQA (TANO A), d. 1852.

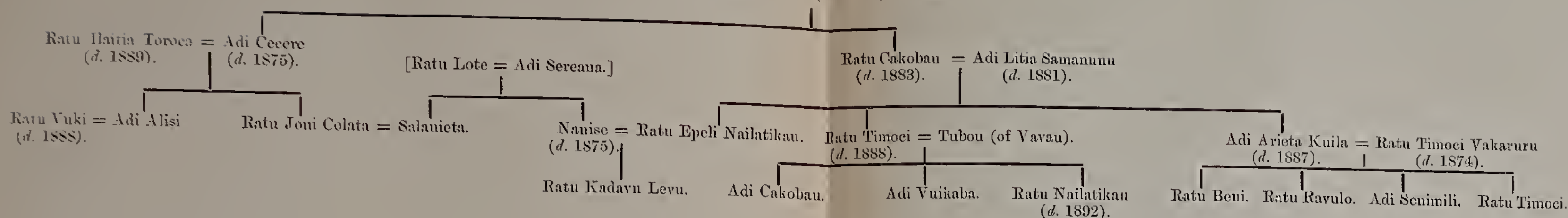


TABLE B.

Table of Relationships of the Chief Family of Bau (See Table A.), showing the Orthogamous Cousins in red.

To be read from the left-hand top corner downwards, thus:—To ascertain what relation Ratu Beni is to Ratu Kadavu Levu, find Ratu Beni's name on the left hand of the table, and follow the line horizontally to the column headed "Ratu Kadavu Levu," when it will be seen that Ratu Beni is Ratu Kadavu Levu's *tavalena*.]

	Adi CECERE.	Ratu CAKOBAT (King of Fiji).	Adi LITIA.	Ratu JONI COLATA.	Adi ALISI (widow of late Roko Tui Bn).	Ratu EPELI NAILATIKAU (Roko Tui Talevu).	Ratu TIMOCI (late Roko Tui Lomaiviti).	Adi KUILA (wife of Tui Naitasiri).	Ratu KADAVU LEVU.	Adi CAKOBAT.	Adi VUKABA.	Ratu NAILATIKAU.	Ratu BENI (Roko Tui Nai- tasiri).	Ratu RAVULO (Buli Naitasiri).	Adi SENIMILI.	Ratu TIMOCI QIOLEVU.
Adi CECERE was to	Self.	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	Sister-in-law. <i>Davena.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Mother. <i>Tivana.</i>	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakava.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>	Great-aunt. <i>Gaveitakana.</i>
Ratu CAKOBAT was to	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Godinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tokana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tukana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tokana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tukana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tukana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tukana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tukana.</i>	Grandfather. <i>Tukana.</i>
Adi LITIA was to	Sister-in-law. <i>Davena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	Self.	Aunt by marriage. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Aunt by marriage. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>	Grandmother. <i>Buna.</i>
Ratu JONI COLATA is to	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Self.	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tamana.*</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tamana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tamana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tamana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tamana.</i>
Adi ALISI is to	Daughter. <i>Luvana.</i>	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tinana.*</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tinana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tinana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tinana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Tinana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Gaveitama.</i>
Ratu EPELI NAILATIKAU is to	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	Self.	Brother, older. <i>Tukana.</i>	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Tamana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Tamana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Tamana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>
Ratu TIMOCI was to	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	Brother. <i>Tacina.</i>	Self.	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Uncle. <i>Tamana.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Father. <i>Tamana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>	Uncle. <i>Gadinana.</i>
Adi KUILA was to	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Daughter. <i>Luvana.</i>	Daughter. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Davena.</i>	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Aunt. <i>Gaveitama.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>	Mother. <i>Tinana.</i>
Ratu KADAVU LEVU is to	Great-nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.*</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.*</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	Nephew. <i>Luvana.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Self.	First-cousin. <i>Gavena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Gavena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tukana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>
Adi CAKOBAT is to	Great-niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Grand- daughter. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grand- daughter. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	Niece. <i>Luvana.</i>	Daughter. <i>Luvana.</i>	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.	Sister. <i>Tukana.</i>	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Davena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>
Adi VUKABA is to	Great-niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Grand- daughter. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grand- daughter. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	Niece. <i>Luvana.</i>	Daughter. <i>Luvana.</i>	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Gavena.</i>	Sister. <i>Tacina.</i>	Self.	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Davena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>
Ratu NAILATIKAU was to	Great-nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	Nephew. <i>Luvana.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tacina.</i>	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>
Ratu BENI is to	Great-nephew. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	Self.	Brother, elder. <i>Tukana.</i>	Brother, elder. <i>Gavena.</i>	Brother, elder. <i>Tukana.</i>
Ratu RAVULO is to	Great-nephew. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	Brother, younger. <i>Tacina.</i>	Self.	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Brother, elder. <i>Tukana.</i>
Adi SENIMILI is to	Great-niece. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grand- daughter. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grand- daughter. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Niece. <i>Fugona.</i>	Daughter. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Davena.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Davena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.	Sister. <i>Gavena.</i>
Ratu TIMOCI QIOLEVU is to	Great-nephew. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	Grandson. <i>Makubuna.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin, once removed. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Nephew. <i>Fugona.</i>	Son. <i>Luvana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin, orthogamous. <i>Davolana.</i>	First-cousin. <i>Tavalena.</i>	Brother, younger. <i>Tacina.</i>	Brother, younger. <i>Tacina.</i>	Brother. <i>Gavena.</i>	Self.

NOTE.—This table does not include all the members of the family in the degrees represented. A selection has been made for the purpose of illustrating the Fijian system of classing relationships, which is all that is intended in this place. Besides the orthogamous relationships marked in the table, therefore, it must be remembered that many of the persons are orthogamous to other cousins not included in the table.

* Ratu Kadavu Levu is in reality *fugona* to Ratu Joni Colata; but he calls the latter his father, because his own mother and Ratu Joni Colata's wife happened to be sisters—as shown in the plan. Ratu Kadavu Levu also addresses Adi Alisi by the familiar term "Nau" or "brother," and speaks of her as *tivana*; but this is for the reason that she and his father are *veidavolani*—orthogamous.

their subjects their divine rights should be impaired. A similar infringement of forbidden degrees by the chiefs has been noticed in Hawaii, where the chief of Mau'i was, for reasons of State, required to marry his half-sister. It is matter of common knowledge that for the same reason the Incas of Peru married their full sister—a custom which is said to have prevailed in Siam and other places.

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42. The custom would seem, therefore, not to be of exclusively Polynesian origin. It may be a survival of an earlier custom of group-marriage and uterine descent such as is to be found in the Banks Islands, where the entire population is divided into two groups which we will call X and O. A man of the X group must marry an O woman, and *vice versâ*. The children, following the mother, are O's, and are, therefore, kin to their mother's brother rather than to their own father. Their mother's brother, an O, marries an X woman, whose children are X's, and are potential wives to their first cousins; although in the Banks Group the blood relationship is not lost sight of, and close marriages are looked on as improper, whilst in Fiji such an union would be obligatory.* The children of two brothers of the X group, following their mothers, would be O's, and therefore forbidden to marry; and so also would be the children of two sisters. Thus far the results of the two customs are the same; but in the Banks Group consanguineous marriage is checked by public opinion, which in Fiji favours such marriages. Group-marriage on precisely the same lines has been noticed in Western Equatorial Africa† and among the Tinnè Indians in North-West America.‡

43. In Fiji, agnatic has generally taken the place of uterine descent (although in some parts of Vanualevu traces of the custom still appear to linger), but the existing system of *vasu*, which gives a man extraordinary claims upon his maternal uncle, may be an indication that orthogamous marriage is a survival of the more ancient custom. The *vasu* system is found to some extent among all peoples who trace descent through the mother. Tacitus, speaking of the ancient Germans, says that the tie between the maternal uncle and his nephew was a more sacred bond than the relation of father and son.§

It is also possible that orthogamous marriage is a relaxation of the stricter prohibition in force amongst the Polynesians. The origin of these prohibitions may, perhaps, be found in some such occurrence as that described in the "Murdu" legend of Australia, quoted by Messrs. Fison and Howitt in "Kamilaroi and Kurnai":—

"After the Creation brothers and sisters and others of the closest kin intermarried promiscuously, until, the evil effects becoming manifest, a council of the chiefs was assembled to consider in what way they might be averted."

Some such crisis must have been reached in every group of islands that was peopled by the immigration of a single family, and the natural solution in every case would have been to prohibit the marriage of both classes of cousins-german. But little by little the desire for alliances among chief families, for the restoration of the balance of the claims of *vasu*, and for the recovery of an equivalent of the tillage rights given in dowry, may have chafed against the prohibitions until these were so far relaxed as to allow the marriage of cousins in the degree most effective for promoting an interchange of property. For a similar reason Moses ordered the daughters of Zelophehad to marry men of their father's tribe, in order that their property should not pass out of the tribe, and "their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father"—(Numbers xxxvi, 12).

A third solution may be found in the transition from uterine to agnatic descent—a change that came about gradually as social development prompted the sons to seize on the inheritance of their father to the exclusion of the nephew (*vasu*). With the admission of the father's relationship to his son grew the idea that he

* Thus, John X marries Mary O. They have two children, Male O and Female O (belong to mother's group). These marry Female X and Male X (*i.e.*, father's group). Their children would be X's and O's respectively following their mothers, and, if of opposite sex, could intermarry, although public opinion regards the union as improper in consequence of the near relationship of the parents.

† Du Chaillu Trans. Ethn. Soc.: N.S., vol. i, p. 321.

‡ Smithsonian Report, 1866, p. 315.

§ De Mor: Germ: xx—quoted by Sir John Lubbock.

he was the life-giver and the mother the mere vehicle for the gestation of the child, and the child came to be regarded as related to his father instead of to his mother.* Thus Orestes,† arraigned for the murder of his mother, Clytemnestra, asks the Erinyes why they did not punish Clytemnestra for slaying her husband, Agamemnon; and, upon their answer that she was not kin to the man she slew, he founds the plea that by the same rule they cannot touch him, for he is not kin to his mother. The plea is admitted by the gods. By this rule a man is not kin to his father's sister's daughter, she being kin to her father only; but her affinity to him would render their marriage convenient as regards the family possessions. From long usage a sense of obligation would be evolved, and such cousins come to be regarded as orthogamous. The children of sisters would still be within the forbidden degrees, for, although not kin through their mothers, their fathers, being presumably the orthogamous cousins of their mothers, would be near kin.

We ourselves incline to accept the first explanation—that the custom of orthogamy has been evolved from an earlier system of group-marriage and uterine descent.

44. Though the Fijian system of relationships is closely allied to those of the Tamils in India, and the Two-mountain Iroquois, and the Wyandots in North America, none of these, so far as we have been able to ascertain, recognise the principle of orthogamous cousinship. The custom must be regarded, we believe, as one of limited range, evolved from marriage laws of far wider application. It undoubtedly exercises upon the Fijians a marked influence in promoting consanguineous marriages—an influence from which the other races in the Pacific are comparatively free, if we except the inhabitants of the island of Tanna in the New Hebrides, and possibly some other islands not yet systematically investigated.

45. The elaborate marriage system once evolved, was established by usage, and, since among primitive races usage is at once law and religion, the prohibitions were hedged round by stringent *tabu*. A man was debarred from social intercourse with the women of his own generation who were within the forbidden degrees of kin. In Australia, and generally where group-marriage exists, he may not speak to his mother-in-law because she belongs to the group of his potential wives, yet is forbidden to him: in Fiji he may only associate with his sister and prohibited cousin (*gane*) formally, and in the presence of others.‡ The word *veiganeni* itself expresses this restriction, being derived probably from the root *ga*, to look about or gape as if unconscious of another's presence (*ga vakasedre ni lolo*). It may even be used of two men who have quarrelled—*erau sa veiganeni*, “they are like brother and sister,” *i.e.*, not on speaking terms.

46. While the obligation binding *veidavolani* to intermarry has been undoubtedly weakened by the combined influence of Christianity and the marriage laws, it is still an active principle.

With the view of testing the extent to which the custom of marrying the first cousin prevails in Fiji at the present time, and the effect which such consanguineous marriages have on the mortality of the children born, we have caused a census of twelve villages to be taken. The villages have not been selected with any view except that of convenience of enumeration and of securing that they should not all belong to one locality. They have, therefore, been chosen from the provinces of Rewa, Colo East, Serua, and Ba.

The following Table shows (1) the villages; (2) the number of families in each; (3) the number of children (alive and dead) that have been born to the existing couples in each town; (4) the number of children in the town (alive and dead) that have been begotten by the fathers of the existing families from other women than their present wives; (5) the number of children (alive and dead) that have

* We find it stated by Dr. Codrington that there is a remarkable tendency throughout the islands of Melanesia towards the substitution of a man's own children for his sister's children and others of his kin in succession to his property; and this appears to begin where the property is the produce of the man's own industry.

† Quoted by Sir John Lubbock—“Origin of Civilisation.”

‡ In Yasawa the sons of two brothers are regarded as *veiganeni*, and are divided by the same social barriers as those that separate persons of opposite sex in the same relation.

have been borne by the mothers of the existing families to other men than their present husbands :—

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ENUMERATION of the Population with the view of ascertaining the number of
Children (alive and dead).

	Number of Families.	Children of the Marriage.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
Vutia	82	127	106	233	16	53	69	30	47	77	173	206	379
Nukui	35	62	37	99	7	21	28	12	12	24	81	70	151
Vuniivideke	28	42	42	84	4	6	10	5	4	9	51	52	103
Navasa	15	27	19	46	3	3	6	1	8	9	31	30	61
Bulu	14	13	17	30	...	13	13	7	8	15	20	38	58
Koroibici	15	17	28	45	5	13	18	3	6	9	25	47	72
Lokia	12	15	5	20	5	4	9	1	7	8	21	16	37
Nabukaluka	54	79	68	147	14	36	50	8	20	28	101	124	225
Vunaniu, Serua	26	44	36	80	7	20	27	11	14	25	62	70	132
Serua	34	53	39	92	7	17	24	16	9	25	76	65	141
Nayavuya, Ba	48	80	89	169	4	23	27	11	18	29	95	130	225
Nailaga, Ba	85	120	152	272	29	78	107	29	40	69	178	270	448
	448	679	638	1,317	101	287	388	134	193	327	914	1,118	2,032

47. In the twelve villages there are 448 families. The couples forming the heads of these families have had born to them, as children of the marriage, 1,317 children, an average of 2·94 of each marriage. But of these 1,317 children only 679 remain alive, while 638 are dead.

The marriages, while producing 2·94 children each, have only 1·52 children remaining alive, while they have lost on an average 1·42 children. The heads of these families, therefore, do not replace themselves by surviving children. Of the children born to them only 51·5 per cent. survive, 48·5 per cent. being lost.

48. For the purpose of this enumeration the inhabitants of the twelve towns in question have been divided into four classes, viz. :—

- (1) *Veidavolani*—Orthogamous cousins who have married together.
- (2) Relations other than marriageable cousins who have intermarried.—Two-fifths of these are near relations—uncle and niece, and non-marriageable cousins-german (brother and sister according to Fijian ideas)—but the remaining three-fifths are more distantly related than the *veidavolani*.
- (3) Townspeople—Natives of the same town, but not otherwise related, who have married together.
- (4) Natives of different towns, not being relations, who have intermarried.

The number of families belonging to each group and the proportion per centum which that number bears to the total are as follows :—

Class.	Number of Families.	Proportion per cent. to total number of Families.
<i>Veidavolani</i> (orthogamous cousins)	133	29·7
Relations other than orthogamous cousins	55	12·3
Townspeople	144	32·1
Natives of different towns	116	25·9

Thus it will be seen that the *veidavolani* and other relations who have intermarried number over two-fifths of the people, whilst one-third of the married people have been brought up together in the same village, and only one-fourth of them (not being relatives) have come from different towns.

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49. We find the relative fecundity of the respective divisions to be as follows :—

- The 133 families of “*Veidavolani*” have had 438 children born to them ;
- The 55 families of “Relations” have had 168 children ;
- The 144 families of “Townspeople” have had 390 children ;
- The 116 families of “Natives of different towns” have had 321 children.

The average number of children born to each family of the respective classes has thus been as follows :—

<i>Veidavolani</i>	3·30 children per family.
Relations	3·06 , ,
Townspeople	2·71 , ,
Natives of different towns ...	2·77 , ,

As regards fecundity, therefore, the *veidavolani* are greatly superior to any of the other classes.

50. But it has been remarked by one of the correspondents that “Fecundity is not vitality.” The question, therefore, is, How many of the children born to these respective divisions have survived? This is answered by the following figures :—

Class.	Number of Families.	Children of the Marriage.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.
<i>Veidavolani</i> (orthogamous cousins)	133	232	206	438
Relations other than orthogamous cousins	55	72	96	168
Townspeople	144	212	178	390
Natives of different towns	116	163	158	321
Total	448	679	638	1,317

The comparative vitality of the average family of each of the four classes is exhibited in the following table :—

Class.	Average Family.		
	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
<i>Veidavolani</i> (orthogamous cousins)	1·74	1·56	3·30
Relations other than orthogamous cousins	1·31	1·75	3·06
Townspeople	1·47	1·24	2·71
Natives of different towns	1·41	1·36	2·77
Total Average	1·52	1·42	2·94

It thus appears that the class which shows the highest vitality is that of the *veidavolani* or orthogamous cousins. This class also shows the greatest fecundity—or highest birth-rate. The class with the next highest fecundity is that of “Relations other than orthogamous cousins;” but it appears that this class exhibits the lowest vitality of the four, since more of their children have died than are now living.

The Townspeople are second in respect of vitality, but a considerable distance behind the *veidavolani*.

It might have been expected that the offspring of the “Natives of different towns” would have shown, if not the highest fecundity, at least the highest vitality. This is the class in which the parties are not related, and it would have appeared reasonable that their progeny should have been superior in vitality to any of the other three classes ; but the families of these unrelated people are only third in point of vitality.

51. An important factor in estimating the stamina of the respective divisions is the mortality among the children born. The average mortality in each family of the four groups is shown to have been as follows :—

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<i>Veidavolani</i>	1.56
Relations	1.75
Townspeople	1.24
Natives of different towns ...	1.36

This indicates that the highest mortality in each family occurs among “ Relations other than orthogamous cousins,” the next highest among the “ *Veidavolani*,” the third among the “ Natives of different towns,” and the lowest among “ Townspeople;” but, of course, the divisions that exhibit the greatest fecundity—or, in other words, the divisions having the largest average family—are subject to a higher mortality per family than those with a lower fecundity.

52. The stamina of the respective classes may, therefore, be best judged by examining the proportion per centum of the children born who remained alive or were dead at the date of the enumeration. These proportions were as follows :—

Class.	Proportion per centum Alive.	Proportion per centum Dead.
<i>Veidavolani</i> (orthogamous cousins)	53	47
Relations other than orthogamous cousins	42.9	57.1
Townspeople	54.4	45.6
Natives of different towns	50.8	49.2

The greatest stamina is thus exhibited by (1) “ Townspeople;” (2) “ *Veidavolani*;” (3) “ Natives of different towns;” (4) “ Relations other than *veidavolani*.” The favourable position of the “ *Veidavolani*” is not much behind that of “ Townspeople;” the position of “ Natives of different towns” is further behind that of the “ *Veidavolani*,” the proportion of children alive being only 50.8 per cent. of those born; but the position of the “ Relations other than *veidavolani*” is conspicuously bad, for only 42.9 per cent. of the children remain alive, while 57.1 per cent. have died.

53. It is remarkable that the two extremes of vitality should occur in the two classes in which inbreeding prevails. The larger class, “ *Veidavolani*” (the class in which the highest fecundity is found), shows the highest vitality of the four groups, with an average surviving family of 1.74. The smaller class, “ Relations other than orthogamous cousins,” which is second in point of fecundity, discloses the lowest vitality, with an average surviving family of 1.31. It has been mentioned that for the most part the persons forming the group “ Relations” are more distantly connected than the orthogamous cousins, only two-fifths of the number consisting of relationships to which a distinctive name could be given. We have not found that *veidavolani* marry as a rule either earlier or later in life than the members of the other classes, but it may be the case that their offspring is better cared for by their relatives, or that there is a peculiar suitability for the marriage relation between the orthogamous cousins (the children of a brother and sister respectively), and that the prejudice usually met with in civilised society against the marriage of first cousins ought really to be attached only to those cousins whom the Fijian system of relationship regards as brothers and sisters (*veiganeni*), viz., the children of two brothers or of two sisters respectively. We do not know that the question is one regarding which any authoritative conclusion has been arrived at; and, while we believe that the figures given represent a fair average of what would be found by a relationship census of the whole Colony, we recognise that they are not of sufficient volume to justify a general deduction. They are, therefore, given for what they may be considered worth, but we see no reason for discounting the conclusions to which they point.

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54. In view of the unfavourable position which the “Relations other than orthogamous cousins,” hold in the foregoing analysis, we deem it desirable to divide the group into two classes. Of the 55 families of “Relations” 33 are stated to be *kawa vata*—i.e., of the same stock, but not necessarily of the same family or generation. 22 of the families of “Relations,” on the other hand, consist of such relationships as *veiganeni* or *veitacini*—that is to say, brother and sister, or cousins not orthogamous; *veivugoni*—uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew; *veitamani*—father and daughter, or paternal uncle and niece; *veitinani* and *veiluvuni*—maternal aunt and nephew, or mother and son.

We shall, therefore, for purposes of identification, divide the group into (1) Relations (distant); (2) Relations (specified).

The following table indicates the position of these respective divisions:—

Division.	Number of Families.	Children of the Marriage.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.
Relations (distant)	33	49	61	110
Average per family ... ..	.....	1.48	1.85	3.33
Relations (specified)	22	23	35	58
Average per family ... ..	.....	1.05	1.59	2.64
Total	55	72	96	168
Average per family ... ..	.....	1.31	1.75	3.06

The fecundity of the distant Relations thus appears to be much higher than that of the specified Relations, and also a trifle higher than that of the *Veidavolani*, which was the highest of the four groups. The comparative figures are as follows:—

Average Family.			
	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
<i>Veidavolani</i>	1.74	1.56	3.30
Relations (distant)	1.48	1.85	3.33

The vitality, however, is much less than that found in the case of the children of the *Veidavolani*, the difference in favour of the *Veidavolani* being equal to .26 per family.

The fecundity of the division “Relations (specified)” is lower than that of any of the four groups, and the vitality of their progeny is greatly inferior to any of the other classes.

The value of the stamina of these two divisions will be seen from the following figures, which indicate the proportion per centum of children born who remained alive, or were dead, at the date of the enumeration:—

	Proportion per centum Alive.	Proportion per centum Dead.
Relations (distant)	44.6	55.4
Relations (specified)	39.7	60.3

From these figures it is seen that both classes of Relations are inferior in point of stamina to any of the other groups, the inferiority of the class “Relations (specified)” being most marked.

On the whole, although the class “Relations (distant)” is superior in fecundity to any of the other groups, it shows a considerably weaker stamina and lower vitality than any of the groups except that of “Relations (specified).” This last division is inferior in fecundity, in stamina, and in vitality to any of the others.

These two divisions, however, constitute only about one-eighth of the heads of households of the twelve towns of which the enumeration was made. The actual proportion is:—

Relations (distant)	7.4 per cent.
Relations (specified)	4.9 „

Total of Relations (except orthogamous cousins) ... 12.3 per cent.

55. Another element has now to be considered, viz., the mortality in the several groups among children who are not the offspring of marriage. The men who are now the fathers of these 448 families have had by other women 388 children, or an average of '86 each. Of these 388 children we find that only 101 remain alive, while 287 are dead; that is to say, of these men's children, who are the offspring of previous marriages or of illicit connections, and whose mothers are in most cases dead, only 26 per cent. remain alive, 74 per cent. having died.

Coming now to the children of the mothers of these families by other men than their present husbands, we find that 327 children have been borne by them, of which 134 are alive and 193 dead. The women have thus had '73 children on an average to other men than their present husbands. Of these children 34·5 per cent. are alive and 65·5 per cent. dead. As might be expected from the conditions of Native life, a greater number of children survive under the care of the mother than under the care of the father. A child who loses its father has more chances of survival than one who loses its mother, the reason doubtless being that a child deprived of its mother has much less care bestowed on it by its male parent, or his new wife, or his relations, than it would have had if its mother had lived.

56. From whatever standpoint it is looked at, the infant mortality is very heavy. In round numbers it may be said—

Where both parents are alive, half the children die ;
Of children in mothers' care, two-thirds die ;
Of children left with father, three-fourths die.

57. Among the 448 families enumerated we found that in 192 of them the husband or the wife, or both, had had children by other partners.

The various phases of this condition of things appear on reference to the following statement:—

Number of families enumerated	...	...	...	...	448	
Families in which no children have been born	...	...	...	...	19	= 4·2 per cent.
Families in which there have been no children except children of the marriage	...	...	...	...	237	= 52·9 „
Families in which children have been born to the husband by other women in addition to the children of the marriage	...	...	...	...	54	= 12 „
Families in which children have been borne by the wife to other men in addition to the children of the marriage	...	...	...	...	47	= 10·5 „
Families in which both husband and wife have had children by other partners in addition to the children of the marriage	...	...	...	...	48	= 10·7 „
Families in which there have been no children save those of the husbands by other women	...	...	...	...	12	= 2·7 „
Families in which there have been no children save those of the wives by other men	...	...	...	...	7	= 1·6 „
Families in which husband and wife have both had children by other partners, but in which there have been no children of the marriage	...	...	...	...	24	= 5·4 „
					448	

58. The position of each of the four marriage groups in this respect is shown in the following table:—

Class.	Number of Families in which there had been born								Total.
	Children of marriage only.	Children to husband also by other women.	Children to wife also by other men.	Children also to both husband and wife by other partners.	No children of marriage but husband's children by other women.	No children of marriage but wife's children by other men.	No children of marriage but husband's and wife's children by other partners.	No children.	
<i>Veidavolani</i> ...	73	13	14	18	2	3	6	4	133
Relations (other) ...	23	11	7	5	1	...	5	3	55
Townpeople ...	90	12	10	12	3	2	7	8	144
Natives of different towns	51	18	16	13	6	2	6	4	116
Total... ..	237	54	47	48	12	7	24	19	448

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We may remark in passing that the number of families in which there have been no children born of the marriage appears unduly large. It amounts to sixty-two cases out of a total of 448, or 13·8 per centum.

The number of families in which no children have been born does not appear greater in the related classes than in the others.

59. The number of families in each of the four classes in which one or both of the parents have had children by other partners, and the proportion which such number bears to the total number of families in each class, is shown in the following statement:—

Class.	Number of Families in which the parents have had children by other partners.	Proportion to the total number of Families in that Class.
<i>Veidavolani</i>	56	42·1 per cent.
Relations	29	52·7 „
Townspople	46	31·9 „
Natives of different towns	61	52·6 „

From this it would appear that the majority of what may be called first marriages occurs among “Townspople” (*i.e.*, natives of the same towns). This probably arises from the fact that in this class each person knows and appreciates the antecedents of the other.

The greatest number of what may be called secondary marriages take place among—(1) Relations (other than orthogamous cousins), and (2) Natives of different towns. The proportions in these two cases are practically the same. In the one case any previous marriage or any irregularity on the part of either of the parents previous to marriage is probably discounted; in the other it may not be made manifest.

60. The mortality in the several classes among children who are not the offspring of existing marriages is shown in the following table:—

Class.	Husband's Children by Other Women.			Wife's Children by Other Men.			Total.		
	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
<i>Veidavolani</i>	38	102	140	47	55	102	85	157	242
Relations	11	40	51	18	25	43	29	65	94
Townspople	19	64	83	33	54	87	52	118	170
Natives of different towns	33	81	114	36	59	95	69	140	209
Total	101	287	388	134	193	327	235	480	715

61. The care which is exercised over these infants in each of the respective classes will be understood from a consideration of the following statement which shows the proportion of children of other unions than existing marriages that remained alive at, or had died before, the date of the enumeration.

Class.	Husband's Children.		Wife's Children.		Total.	
	Alive.	Dead.	Alive.	Dead.	Alive.	Dead.
<i>Veidavolani</i> per cent.	27·1	72·9	46·1	53·9	35·1	64·9
Relations... .. „	21·6	78·4	41·9	58·1	30·9	69·1
Townspople „	22·9	77·1	37·9	62·1	30·6	69·4
Natives of different towns „	28·9	71·1	37·9	62·1	33	67
Total	26	74	41	59	32·9	67·1

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In this respect the "Veidavolani" and the "Natives of different towns" occupy the best position. The *veidavolani* save 35·1 per cent. of their step-children, and the "Natives of different towns" save 33 per cent. of them. We can only conjecture that in the case of the *veidavolani* the orthogamous relation of the married couples may give them a greater interest in each other's children; or that their survival may be because some of the previous marriages, to which those children were born, were unions of *veidavolani*, in which case the child would be related to its step-parent; or that it may be owing to the exercise of the Levirate. In the case of "Natives of different towns" the proportion of wife's children surviving is very low; although the total number of children surviving in this class comes next to that recorded in the case of the *veidavolani*.

The survival of "husband's children" in the class "Relations" is markedly low; and the survival of step-children among the class "Townsppeople" is low throughout. The figures representing the respective classes exhibit on the whole less difference than might have been expected.

62. The total number of step-children born is seen to be—

Husband's children	...	...	...	388
Wife's children...	...	...	...	327

715

This number is equal to more than one-half of the number of children born of the existing marriages, viz., 1,317.

Step-children thus form 35·2 per cent. of all children born.

But surviving step-children form only 25·7 per cent. of children that survive.

And deaths of step-children form 43·8 per cent. of total deaths of children.

	Step-children.	Children of existing Marriage.
Thus out of every hundred children we may assume the number to be	... 35	... 65
But the number reared will be	... 11	... 33

Deaths thus being ... 24 out of 35 32 out of 65

In one hundred children of each class the number of deaths would be—

Children of existing marriages	... 51
Step-children	... 67

The condition of these children, of whom some are illegitimates and some orphans, is a matter for which provision should be made. We think the required attention to them could best be given by means of the village crèches which it is proposed to establish.

63. The following table shows the number born, surviving, and dead of—(1) Children of the marriage, and (2) Step-children, of each of the four classes.

ABSTRACT of the Census of Twelve Towns taken by the Commission, shewing the number of Children and Step-children Surviving and Dead in each Class of the population.

Class.		No. of Families.	Children of the Marriage.			Husband's Children by Other Women.			Wife's Children by Other Men.			Total.		
			Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
Veidavolani	...	133	232	206	438	38	102	140	47	55	102	317	363	680
Do.	Proportion per centum to the Grand Total	29·7	34·2	32·3	33·3	37·6	35·5	36·1	35·1	28·5	31·2	34·7	32·5	33·5
Relations	...	55	72	96	168	11	40	51	18	25	43	101	161	262
Do.	Proportion per centum to the Grand Total	12·3	10·6	15·0	12·7	10·9	14·0	13·1	13·4	13·0	13·1	11·0	14·4	12·9
Townsppeople (not relations)	...	144	212	178	390	19	64	83	33	54	87	264	296	560
Do.	Proportion per centum to the Grand Total	32·1	31·2	27·9	29·6	18·8	22·3	21·4	24·6	28·0	26·6	28·9	26·5	27·5
Different Towns.—(Not relations)	...	116	163	158	321	33	81	114	36	59	95	232	298	530
Do.	Proportion per centum to the Grand Total	25·9	24·0	24·8	24·4	32·7	28·2	29·4	26·9	30·5	29·1	25·4	26·6	26·1
Grand Totals		448	679	638	1,317	101	287	388	134	193	327	914	1,118	2,032

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This table shows that no class of the population replaces itself by the surviving children of the marriage. The class that most nearly attains to this position is that of the *veidavolani*. They consist of 133 families or 266 individuals, and out of 438 children born of the marriage, 232 survive.

It also shows that even when the step-children are included in the computation two of the classes fail to replace themselves. Thus "Townspeople" consisting of 144 families or 288 parents have only 264 children and step-children surviving.

Relations other than orthogamous cousins—consisting of fifty-five families, or 110 individuals—have only 101 children and step-children surviving out of 262 born.

"Natives of different towns," on the other hand number 116 families or 232 parents. Although their surviving children are few (163) the surviving children and step-children together number 232, thus exactly replacing the parents of the existing families, but not the parents of the step-children.

In the case of the *veidavolani*, however, which number 133 families or 266 parents, the surviving children and step-children number 317, thus replacing the heads of the existing families and leaving 51 children towards replacing the parents of the step-children.

It was shown that among the *veidavolani* the number of families in which the parents have had children by other partners was fifty-six. In twenty-four of these families both husband and wife had had children by other partners. The total number of persons concerned in procreating the children and step-children of the *veidavolani* is thus $266 + 56 + 24 = 346$. It may safely be assumed—especially in the case of the *veidavolani*—that one-half of these step-children are illegitimates, whose parents need not for the purposes of this computation be regarded as dead. The *veidavolani* should, therefore, replace $266 + 40 = 306$ heads of families, which the 317 children do, leaving a number to go towards increase of population.

64. In every respect the "*Veidavolani*" appears to be the most satisfactory marriage class.

They amount to only 29·7 per cent. of the population. But they bear 33·3 per cent. of the children born; and they rear 34·2 per cent. of the children reared; and including step-children they rear 34·7 of the children who survive.

65. We must admit that we did not anticipate this favourable predominance on the part of the *veidavolani*. On ascertaining that over one-fourth of the married population consists of intermarried cousins we were prepared to find that any want of vitality or of stamina would probably occur among the children of that class. But the statistics show that the *veidavolani* are the most prolific element in the population, and that they rear the largest families of any of the classes into which the married population is divided. The difference which exists between the "*Veidavolani*" and "Relations not orthogamous cousins," is most marked.

66. It has been shown that the marriage of *veidavolani* is not now considered popular, but is rather looked on as insipid; and we do not know that the pair of *veidavolani* have any advantage over "Townspeople not related" in cases, such as a confinement, where the assistance of friends is necessary. Indeed *veidavolani* frequently belong to different towns, which might prevent the mother from having the services of her own family on such an occasion. The influences at work to make the *veidavolani* so satisfactory a procreative element in the population must therefore be of a combined physical and moral nature. The fact that the *veidavolani* bear more children than any of the other classes argues their superior physical fitness for procreation. The circumstance that a greater proportion of their children and step-children are reared than is the case in the other classes points to the conclusion that the relationship of the parents give them a higher sense of responsibility towards their children.

We believe that the influence works towards both increasing the birth-rate and preserving the children born. It is a common practice among Fijian women, when angry with their husbands, to take some step to destroy their unborn child; but

but in the case of *veidavolani* the mother feels instinctively that the child within her, being the progeny of a man of her own blood, and her husband from birth, is related to her in a sense which the wife of a mixed marriage can never comprehend. When the child is born the relations of both husband and wife, in their satisfaction that their line has flowed on in the proper channel, do not spare themselves in bestowing either pains or substance upon the care of the child and its mother.

The foregoing figures seem to indicate that, if the whole of the marriages in the Colony were between *veidavolani*, there would probably be no decrease of population to complain of.

67. We incline to believe that in past times the extensive practice of *veidavolani* marriage even favoured the increase of population before foreign epidemics, war, and barbarous customs had united to check the upward tendency. We do not think that this phase of inbreeding has had or now has any effect towards diminishing the number of the population. On the contrary, we incline to think that the position of the population has suffered from the fact that the inherited social comity of the people has not yet adapted itself to the modern tendency to abandon the old custom of *veidavolani* marriage and to adopt the civilised method of mutual selection. In thus throwing off his obligation and following his bent the Fijian enters on what to him is an experimental, perhaps a tentative, course.

68. While, therefore, holding the opinion that the decadence of the race is not due to the intermarriage of orthogamous cousins, we do not desire to see the system unnecessarily perpetuated, though we would not seek to interfere with its practice. The custom appears to be on the wane, and should be allowed to take its own course. That being so, we think the next practical step would be to facilitate the selection of partners from extended areas by concentration of towns and by the creation of Model Settlements.

III.—EPIDEMIC DISEASES.

Digest of Replies.

69. Sixteen correspondents refer to the effect that epidemic diseases have had on the native population. The epidemics that have occurred since the Cession of the Colony are :—(1) Measles, 1875, resulting in about 40,000 deaths ; (2) Whooping-cough, 1884, resulting in about 3,000 deaths ; (3) Dengue, Dysentery, and Catarrhal Influenza, 1885–6, resulting in about 1,000 deaths ; (4) Epidemic Influenza and Whooping-cough, 1891, resulting in about 1,500 deaths ; (5) Catarrhal Influenza, annually in the cold months ; (6) Phagedœnic Dysentery, occasionally in circumscribed epidemics.

70. The following facts and opinions are given :—

- (1) That the epidemic of Measles, which contributed 40,000 deaths in a population of 150,000, completely changed the face of the population.
- (2) That “the epidemic of Measles may be credited with having dealt the most deadly and lasting blow at the vitality of the Fijians.” The health of the people has not been so good since the Measles. The disease left many of the old people with impaired constitutions, making them more susceptible to further disorders.
- (3) That five years of the past decade show an increase of population, viz.,—1881, 1882, 1883, 1887, and 1888, and that during those years—particularly the last two, when the principal increase took place—no epidemic visited the Colony. That it would seem, therefore, that whenever the Colony is free from epidemic diseases of European origin, the native population does not decrease.
- (4) That De Quatrefages states that the natives of Eastern Polynesia were subject to fatal epidemics before the arrival of foreigners, and that the decadence of the straight-haired Polynesians was due to the introduction of tubercular consumption.
- (5) That Europeans and Natives agree that the new diseases brought into the country are a very fruitful cause of mortality.

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EPIDEMIC
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Digest of
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Circular.

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Digest of
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Circular.

- (6) That epidemics of foreign origin constitute a risk to which native children are now occasionally exposed, and from which the children of one or two generations ago were entirely exempt.
- (7) That natives have no medicines for modern diseases, and do not know how to bestow nursing and diet and warmth, and are ignorant of the danger of neglect; and that consequently these diseases prove especially fatal to infants. That natives attempt to allay feverish diseases by cold bathing.
- (8) That diarrhoea and dysentery, being specially fatal to infants, are responsible for the decrease of the population; and that dysentery was probably introduced by the first white men who reached the Group.
- (9) That there are native traditions of occasional epidemics before the arrival of Europeans.
- (10) That the epidemic of *Lila* (Wasting of the body), which occurred about the end of last century swept off many thousands; and that the decrease of the native race commenced from that period.
- (11) That the causes of the decadence of the race are unaffected by the intercourse of the Natives with Europeans. In connection with the opinion said to be held by some inquirers, "That there is a mysterious malign influence surrounding the white man like a poisonous atmosphere which stifles every coloured race encountering it," it is pointed out,—
 - (a) That the decrease is not materially greater in those groups where the whites form an appreciable percentage of the population than in those where there are only a few Europeans.
 - (b) That the negro increases fast in the United States where he is in the minority, and is decreasing in Cape Colony, Natal, and Transvaal, where the whites form but a minor proportion of the population.
- (12) That the depressed vitality of the race (through inbreeding) renders it unable to contend with epidemic diseases. That epidemics "have to be reckoned with in the future."
- (13) That natives succumb to epidemic diseases very readily from want of courage and hope, and from intractability and lack of resource when ill.
- (14) That an official opinion has been expressed, "That unless a race makes a distinct gain in years in which there are no epidemics its extinction can only be a question of time."
- (15) That the native population increased rapidly after the measles, and that, after a great decrease of population in any country from war and pestilence, such is generally the case.

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71. When asked for their opinion upon the probable causes of the diminution of the race, most Fijians attribute it to infectious diseases introduced among them by foreign ships. In using the expression "infectious diseases" they do not limit their meaning to such common types as, for instance, measles or whooping-cough, or other properly called zymotic epidemics; but they include certain diseases now endemic amongst them, of which the most fatal is certainly dysentery. Another is influenza; not merely the specific pandemic influenza which, owing to modern rapid and far-reaching communication has overspread the world since 1889, but the ordinary annually recurrent febrile catarrh, or severe cold in the head and chest, which is now one of the commonest ailments in the country, and which often leads to serious consequences, especially in aged persons, infants, and in those already the subjects of pulmonary disease.

72. In the course of our inquiries we have been repeatedly informed by Fijians that they believe dysentery to be a foreign malady originally introduced by the crews of European vessels. "Before white men came," say the old men and women,

women, "no one died of acute diseases: all the people who died were emaciated by lingering infirmities before death. Coughs came with white men, so did dysentery. Ratu Banuve is said to have died from a foreign disease resembling dysentery soon after it was first brought here. This is what we have always heard from our elders."

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73. Fijians are not the only islanders who declare that dysentery and influenza have been introduced among them by contact with foreigners. It has been recorded by the late Dr. Turner of Samoa that this is the general belief of the natives of Tanna and all natives throughout the Pacific. As we have found in Fiji so did Dr. Turner find in Tanna fifty years ago. Writing of Tanna in the New Hebrides, he says:—

"Coughs, influenza, dysentery, and some skin diseases, the Tannese attribute to their intercourse with white men, and call them 'foreign things.' When a person is said to be ill, the next question is, 'What is the matter? Is it *nahae* (witchcraft) or a foreign thing?' The opinion there is universal that they have had tenfold more diseases and death since they had intercourse with ships than they had before. We thought at first that it was prejudice and fault-finding, but the reply of the more honest and thoughtful of the natives invariably was, 'It is quite true; formerly here people never died until they were old, but nowadays there is no end of this influenza, coughing, and death.'"^{*}

Turner himself with his associate, their wives, and the other members of his Mission, was driven to flee from Tanna because an epidemic of dysentery occurring there was attributed to their presence. Even a worse fate befel the whole mission family of Samoans left upon the neighbouring island of Futuna for precisely the same reason; others were killed on similar grounds at the Isle of Pines, and the teachers were also threatened at the other New Hebrides,—Aneiteum and Niue.

On 20th May, 1861, the Rev. G. N. Gordon and his wife were killed by the natives of Eromanga in consequence of an outbreak of measles which had been introduced by a trading vessel.

74. The same writer referring to Samoa relates that—

"Influenza is a new disease to the natives. They say that the first attack of it ever known in Samoa was during the Aana war in 1830, just as the missionaries Williams and Barth with Tahitian teachers first reached their shores. The natives at once traced the disease to the foreigners and the new religion; the same opinion spread through these seas, and especially among the islands of the New Hebrides, has proved a serious hindrance to the labours of missionaries and native teachers. Ever since, there have been returns of the disease almost annually * * * in many cases it is fatal to old people and those who have been previously weakened by pulmonary diseases."^{*}

75. At Niue the natives, whose demeanour earned for them from Cook the designation of "Savage Islanders," persistently killed all strangers who attempted to land among them. Captain Cook says:—

"The endeavours we used to bring them to a parley, were to no purpose; for they came with the ferocity of wild boars and threw their darts."[†]

Dr. Turner, who visited Niue in 1848, and again in 1859, states that,—

"Natives of other islands who drifted there in distress, whether from Tonga, Samoa, or elsewhere, were invariably killed. Any of their own people who went away in a ship and came back were killed; and all this was occasioned by a dread of disease. For years after they began to venture out to ships, they would not immediately use anything obtained, but hung it up in the bush in quarantine for weeks."^{*}

He had great difficulty in landing a teacher, a lad belonging to Niue whom he had met with and trained in Samoa, as armed crowds approached to kill him. They wanted to send back his Samoan canoe and his chest of property to the mission-ship as soon as they were landed, saying that the foreign wood would cause disease among them. John Williams, during his memorable voyage in the "Messenger of Peace," in 1830, recruited two Niue lads, and subsequently returned them to their island; but after a time influenza broke out there, and the two young men were blamed for bringing it from Tahiti. One of them was killed and also his father; the other escaped on board a whaler with a man whom Dr. Turner refers to as brought back in 1848. Dr. Turner further remarks,—

"Many of the people, including some of the chiefs, of Lifu (Loyalty), were cut off by an epidemic towards the end of 1846. As it broke out soon after the arrival of fresh teachers they were blamed as having brought it. Many were determined to kill them. 'Kill them,' said their enemies, 'and there will be an end to the sickness.'"^{*}

76. In New Caledonia, as elsewhere, the natives think that white men are the spirits of the dead, and bring sickness; and they give this as a reason why they should kill them.

77.

* "Nineteen Years in Polynesia;" by the Rev. George Turner.—London, 1861.

† "A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World;" by James Cook: book iii, chap. 1.—London, 1779.

77. The Tahitians accused the Spaniards of introducing a disease like influenza to their island during the visit of a Peruvian ship as long ago as the interval between Cook's first and second voyages.

78. We have also found in Tonga a tradition of a destructive epidemic that is said to have visited that group between the first and second voyages of Captain Cook,—1773—1777. The symptoms were severe headache resulting in death after a few days' illness. The native name *Gagau* means "Headache." The Tongans, however, do not seem to have associated this visitation with the arrival of Captain Cook's ships.

79. The crew of the brig "Chatham," which was wrecked on Penrhyn Island in 1853, were the first Europeans to land on the island. Some three months after their arrival an epidemic broke out among the natives, and caused many deaths. The principal symptoms were high fever and intense headache, and the attacks were generally fatal after a few day's illness. The crew of the ship were, we are informed by one of the survivors, quite free from disease at the time, but some of them caught the disease from the natives though in a milder form. Besides this fever, an epidemic of sores had previously broken out among the natives during the stay of the shipwrecked crew on the island, which the Europeans attributed to the unaccustomed animal food that the natives had obtained from the wreck.

The sickness awakened a hostile feeling against the whites, and speeches were made against them. "Why had we come to their land? They had never any sickness like this before we came, and, if we remained, we should be bringing other complaints to carry them off. Better for us to leave. They would furnish us with canoes and we must return to our own land."*

80. In the matter of skin diseases we know as a fact that it was through the agency of white men and their ships, although in the persons of coloured passengers, that Tokelau ringworm was introduced to Fiji from the Tokelau islands, and that yaws was introduced to those islands from Fiji and Samoa, about the year 1864, within the recollection of Europeans still living here.

81. The islanders of the Kauu atolls, called on the charts the Mortlock or Marqueen Group (lat. 4° 45' S., long. 156° 30' E.), when an epidemic was prevalent on shore went so far as to disinfect, or disenchant, the crew of the "Lord of the Isles" barquentine, while parleying with them at sea, off their reefs,—one man in each canoe being provided with a handful of ashes done up in leaves which he scattered in the air when closing the interview.†

82. In the first Government expedition made by the Administrator of British New Guinea and his Suite to the d'Entrecasteaux Group, in the year 1888, an incident of a similar nature occurred. The natives would not consent to hold intercourse with the visitors until an old man had chewed a scented bark and spat it over each of the party and over his own following, which ceremony at once established friendly relations.

83. The people of the island of St. Kilda resemble the South Sea Islanders in laying a like charge against visitors from Scotland, and call their ailment the "stranger's cold" or "boat cough."

84. A similar belief was current at almost all the islands of the Pacific when first brought to the acquaintance of Europeans, and this, coupled with their superstitious faith in disease-mongers and sorcerers generally, doubtless accounts for their murderous system of quarantine. The Fijians practised a similar slaughter, but inasmuch as they ate their victims it would appear that they were actuated by different motives.

85. There is no doubt whatever that the Fijians recognise the infectious nature of some diseases, though they have hardly learned as yet to separate the idea of physical contagion from that of supernatural influence, and many of them still regard the symptoms of disease as the "*mana*" or manifestation of occult agencies. If it be true that dysentery and colds and coughs did not exist before foreign ships visited the islands, it would not be unnatural in the natives to ascribe their

* "Wild Life in the Pacific Islands."—H. E. Lamont.

† Extract from the Official Journal of Government Agent, schooner "Lord of the Isles," 1882.

their subsequent occurrence to such visits, nor, from a scientific point of view, is there anything to refute the plausibility of such an opinion. Modern bacteriological research is showing that almost every acute disease is the consequence of general infection. The same law may apply to fluxes and catarrhs. Dysentery is well known to be capable of spreading by contagion, varying, it is true, in the conditions and degree of its communicability, but still sufficiently catching to occur at times as a distinct epidemic, and to be traceable to contagion directly derived from persons or from human excreta. "Dysentery is an inflammatory affection of the large intestine due to the action of a specific virus. The exact nature of the virus is unknown, but it is probably bacterial. The affection is epidemic, endemic, or sporadic in its occurrence."* We know that this is true of dysentery in Fiji, and the neighbouring archipelagoes,† and in quite recent times a bacterium of dysentery has actually been isolated. The epidemic which occurred in February, 1893, at Futuna (New Hebrides), after contact with an infected ship‡ furnishes another case in point.§

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86. To those who may contend that tropical dysentery is a malarial disease, and therefore unlikely to be conveyed across the wide areas of ocean which ships must traverse to reach these islands, the case of Mauritius may be cited. Malarial fevers were there practically unknown before the year 1867, when an epidemic of that nature ravaged the inhabitants to such an extent that the price of quinine rose in a few weeks from about a guinea to £40 an ounce. Ague, or fever of a distinctly malarial character, has ever since remained endemic there.

If this can occur in the case of malarial fever, it is not less likely to happen with dysentery.

87. The Hon. W. S. Carew, Resident Commissioner of Colo East, states in this connection,—

"The natives have always insisted that "lila" and dysentery and bad forms of diarrhoea were coeval with the arrival of the white man, and always believed dysentery to be highly contagious. At a time when I believed otherwise, I have often attempted to rebut the opinion but never succeeded. They insisted that if one of their number got it it went more or less through the whole village."

88. More than half the deaths among Fijians nowadays result from bowel complaints, of which a large proportion are dysenteric. The deaths of children under one year of age number 37 per cent. of the whole, and these too are mainly attributable to bowel diseases. Children, more readily than adult persons, become the prey of bacterial diseases; and when their habits and surroundings are unclean this tendency is emphasised.

89. It was not to be expected that the Fijians should escape the fate of so many of the native races of the Pacific in their first contact with Europeans. The earliest written account of widespread epidemics in Fiji is that of the Rev. John Hunt in his memoir of the Rev. William Cross, the first missionary to Fiji, written in 1843-4|| though not published until several years later. His statement is as follows:—

"The first white people with whom the Fijians had any intercourse were four or five shipwrecked mariners, one or two of whom were dressed something like ministers of religion: probably the master and a passenger. The vessel was wrecked on a reef near Oneata called Bukatatanoa, and the party referred to were either killed at Oneata or Lakeba, and, I fear, eaten also. Shortly after their death a dreadful distemper scourged the natives. It appears, from the description given of it, to have been a very acute dysentery, or a form of cholera. Its progress through the Group was fearfully rapid and destructive: in many places it was with the greatest difficulty that persons could be found to bury the dead. Those who were seized died in the most excruciating agonies."

90.

* "A Text-book of Pathological Anatomy and Pathogenesis;" by Ernst Ziegler.—English Editions, London, 1885.

† "Fiji: Polynesian Immigration, 1891. Report on an Outbreak of Dysentery and Enteritis, &c.," 1890; by C. Daniels, M.B., with a Memorandum by the Chief Medical Officer.

‡ The "Empreza" of Brisbane.

§ Extract from a letter from Dr. Wm. Gunn, Medical Missionary of the Presbyterian Church at Futuna, New Hebrides, to the Immigration Department, Fiji, dated Thursday (14 Sept., 1893):—" * * * I venture to express the hope that if they are sent home they may carry no infectious disease with them. There is no one at the other end, that is at Futuna, to prevent persons having infectious diseases landing, hence there is all the more need of seeing that none is taken on board. I mention this because a labour vessel from Queensland landed a child suffering from dysentery at Futuna in the beginning of February, and the consequence was that nearly a third of the population was swept away by dysentery. The same vessel landed another at Eromanga and forty-six died in consequence. Further, dysentery was introduced into quite a number of islands by the same vessel (the 'Empreza') and many deaths followed * * * I am, &c., (Signed), WILLIAM GUNN, Missionary of Futuna and Aneityum."

|| "Memoir of the Rev. William Cross, Missionary to the Fiji Islands;" by the Rev. John Hunt.—London, 1861.

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90. The only correspondent who has alluded to epidemics of former times is The Hon. W. S. Carew, whose remarks, though necessarily brief, are no less interesting than their credibility is undoubted. He writes, however, of an epidemic which he calls the *lila balavu*, or "wasting sickness," the symptoms of which do not indicate the acute form of dysentery spoken of by the Rev. John Hunt. We have, therefore, proceeded to make systematic search for traditions bearing on this sickness, with the result that the occurrence of at least two epidemics contemporary with the arrival of the first European ships is established beyond a doubt.

91. Mr. David Wilkinson, whom we were able to consult after his Paper (No. 59) was in type, stated his belief that there were at least two epidemics prior to the measles of 1875, and that one of them (not dysentery) took place as long ago as the middle of the last century, while the other, a form of dysentery, occurred somewhere about the year 1800. The tradition of the former reached him by means of a remarkably pathetic *meke* (song), received by the mother of the late Ratu Hezekiah from her mother who could not remember the event itself. It ascribes the origin of the disease to the visit of a ship to the Macuata coast, and links it with the appearance of a notable comet. The *meke* itself has unfortunately been lost. On revisiting the place, Mr. Wilkinson found that the old woman was dead, and that only a fragment of the *meke* could be recovered; but he remembers that the town of Koroma, called in the *meke* the "town of a thousand foundations," was said to have been depopulated by the epidemic. Mr. Wilkinson visited the site of this town, and found the house-foundations overgrown with mature forest trees of the second order of rotation and of advanced girth, estimated by him to be from sixty to seventy years old when he saw them in 1860-2.

92. We have met with traditions of this epidemic in Vanualevu, Ra, Tailevu, Kadavu, Lau, and Nadroga, and these traditions all point to the occurrence of two disastrous epidemics about the time of the first visit of European ships, and at no great interval apart. The first of these seems to have been a lingering disease with the symptoms of headache, intense thirst, loss of appetite, stuffiness of the nose and oppression of the chest. The second was a very acute form of dysentery, but the symptoms of the two have been so much confused that it is impossible now to conjecture with any likelihood of accuracy what was the true nature of the first visitation.

93. There are, however, several data that enable us to fix the time of both of these epidemics within a few years. All accounts agree that Banuve, the Vunivalu of Bau, died of dysentery, and that he was thereafter known as *Bale i Vavalagi* (The victim of the foreign disease). We know that his successor was Naulivou, otherwise known as Ra Matenikutu, and that this chief was reigning at the date of Charles Savage's arrival in the Group. We also know from Peter Dillon's account of his adventures in Fiji that Savage arrived in the Group in the American brig "Eliza," from the River Plate, which was wrecked on the Nairai Reef in 1808.*

94. From Oneata we have been supplied with a tradition of the wreck on the Bukatatanoa, or Argo Reef, of the first ship seen by the people of Lau. A number of Europeans who appear to have worn red caps over their ears were saved, and guns and powder seem to have come into the hands of the natives, who did not, however, know how to use them, for the tradition describes them as employing the powder to blacken their hair and faces, and the ramrods as hair ornaments (*moqe*). There were then at Oneata some of the kai Levuka of Lakeba, the *mataqali* who are charged with the duty of installing a new Vunivalu of Bau. This tradition says no more of the subsequent fate of the survivors of the wreck than that some of them were killed, and that the Levuka people took the rest away with them, together with some of the loot from the wreck, a great sickness subsequently breaking out among the people. From Bau, however, we have received a tradition that supplies the sequel. On Banuve's death from dysentery the Levuka people came from Lakeba to install his successor, Naulivou. With them they brought

* Narrative of a voyage in the South Seas to ascertain the actual fate of La Pérouse's expedition—by the Chevalier, Captain P. Dillon.—London, 1829.

brought a canvas tent, the first European property the Bau people had seen. The day of his installation was also marked by a total eclipse of the sun.*

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95. The very interesting *meke* printed as an Appendix to this Report† speaks of the appearance of a large comet with three tails which was visible for thirty-seven nights. It is recorded that when the comet of 1882 was seen by the natives the old men said that it came in connection with the death of Cakobau, remarking that a larger comet than that had heralded the death of Banuve, and a smaller one the destruction of Suva by the Naitasiri people, an event which took place about 1843. Now the only comet recorded about the beginning of the century, besides Donati's which appeared in 1811 too late for Banuve's death, was the comet of 1803, and this date corresponds exactly with the other traditions we have of Naulivou's reign which we know lasted until 1829. We therefore believe that dysentery was introduced by a vessel which was wrecked on the Argo Reef in 1802-3.

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96. The date of the "lila" is not so easy to fix. Traditions both from Noco and Nakelo indicate that the interval between the two visitations was sufficient to allow the places of those who died in the "lila" to begin to be filled up; these traditions also point to the fact that it was introduced by an European ship. Besides the voyages of Tasman in 1643, and Lieutenant Bligh in the "Bounty's" launch in 1789, neither of whom had communication with the shore, the earliest recorded visit of an European is that of Lieutenant Hayward of H.M.S. "Pandora," who, in 1791, was despatched to Fiji by Capt. Edwardes in a native canoe, hired in Namuka, Tonga, to search for the mutineers of the "Bounty." This officer landed, probably in Lakeba, and was well received by the natives. Captain Bligh in his second voyage, in H.M.S. "Providence," coasted along the shore of Taviumi in 1792, and was pursued by canoes. On the 26th April, 1794, the snow "Arthur" touched at the Yasawa Islands and was attacked by the natives. Either the first or third of these visitors may have introduced the "lila," if it was not brought by some vessel which visited the Group at an earlier date and left no record of its voyage, perhaps a ship from the Dutch or English East Indies trading for bêche-de-mère or sandalwood. But the native custom of naming children after any remarkable event occurring at the time of their birth enables us to apply a check to the date of the introduction of the "lila." A Lasakau chief named Komaibole was called *Nalila* from his having been born about the time of that visitation. A native woman now living, who is about seventy years of age, states that she was taken to Bau when about sixteen, and that she there saw the chief Nalila Komaibole who was a middle-aged man of probably forty-five years. He was clubbed some five years afterwards. This would indicate that the epidemic of "lila" occurred a hundred years ago,—about the date of the visit of Lieutenant Hayward to Lakeba.

97. It is probable that the "lila" would not of itself have been very destructive to life but for the strangling of persons who had been long ill, a custom which is said to have originated with the "lila." The sufferers seem to have lain sick for months losing strength every day, and becoming a burden to themselves and offensive to their friends. They were then strangled, doubtless with every mark of affection, in the same manner as the act was perpetrated in the time of the first missionaries. Whole villages were thus emptied by the sickness and by the famine following it which was caused by the weakness of the people and the expenditure of provisions for funeral feasts. Besides the town of Koroma above referred to, we know that the tribes of Davuilevu and Korolevu in the Toga district of Rewa were swept away. Indeed, tradition asserts that Naitasiri was only saved by the discovery of a cure for the disease in the *laqaiqai*, which was thereafter called *Vueti Naitasiri* (The Naitasiri cure). The *wavuvavu* seems also to have been efficacious as a cure for the "lila."

98. The epidemic of dysentery is described as having been even more fatal than that of measles. "Before the dysentery came," says the tradition, "every village

* A total eclipse of the sun—not visible in England—took place on 7th September, 1802. It is described as having been of an extraordinary appearance; but we are without such particulars as would enable us to ascertain whether it was visible in Fiji.

† See Appendix.

village was crowded with men; there was no space between them, so crowded were they. From that time our villages began to be empty." The people left their plague-stricken towns and fled, leaving the sick to take care of themselves. The Nakelo version of the story declares that the sickness was stayed by a great flood, higher than any that has been seen before or since. Whole villages were swept out to sea, and the mangrove was buried deep in silt. This flood it is said formed much of the land on the lower Rewa. A similar tradition is found in Bua.

99. Besides these great epidemics of 1791-2 and 1802-3, there are traditions of a less serious visitation of a disease called by the natives *Vudicoro*, signifying that the skin assumed the appearance of a scalded banana. This seems to have visited the Group about 1820, but to have caused but few deaths.

100. Other epidemics more circumscribed in extent have been recorded since then in various parts of the Group, some of foreign and some of local origin; but none of these is comparable, in the degree of mortality they caused, to the great modern invasion of measles in 1875. The history of this epidemic has been already recorded in Parliamentary papers (C. 1634) and in the transactions of the Epidemiological Society of London (N. S. vol. iii, 1884). Introduced by H.M.S. "Dido" in the persons of the Vunivalu's own son, Ratu Timoce, and his servant, measles spread with unexampled rapidity owing to its dissemination throughout the country on the return to their various districts of the members of a great native meeting which was held at Levuka a few days after the "Dido's" arrival. The people were estimated at that time to number about 150,000, and it is recorded, probably with fair exactitude, that 40,000 died from measles during the epidemic, which overran the whole archipelago in the space of four months and then disappeared. Whether the Fijians who survived the epidemic of 1875—an event which has become their principal date-mark—have had their stamina permanently lowered by it can only be a matter for conjecture. The great mortality caused by this epidemic was partly the consequence of the suddenness with which it befell the people, village by village, every individual being susceptible because unprotected by any previous attack. Whole communities were stricken at one time, and there was no one left to gather food or carry water, to attend to the necessary wants of their fellows, or even, in many cases, to bury the dead. Consequently many must have died of starvation and neglect; but the heavy mortality was also attributable in great measure to the people's dire ignorance of the simplest nursing precautions, to their blind unimpressiveness, their want of ordinary foresight, their apathy and despair. They became at once, what is so well expressed by their own word, "*tagaya*"—overwhelmed, dismayed, cowed—abandoning all hope of self-preservation, and becoming incapable of any effort to save themselves or others.

101. The other major epidemics, that is to say, foreign zymotic diseases, to which the natives have been exposed in recent times are—(1) whooping-cough in 1884, 1890, and 1891; (2) dengue, 1885; (3) cerebro-spinal meningitis, 1885; and (4) influenza, 1891-2. Of these whooping-cough has proved by far the most fatal and is unfortunately now permanently domiciled in the Colony. This disease also prevailed in Samoa, in 1849,* but eventually died out there.

102. Several of our native witnesses stated that they had heard from Europeans that the white race always brought death to coloured races. They undoubtedly believed this, and most of them regarded the existence of the white race among them as the cause of the decrease of the native population.† Such a belief is naturally accompanied by bitter feelings, although these were not expressed.

We

* "Nineteen Years in Polynesia."

† Since this Report was presented the following letter was received from Josefa Sokovagone, a native of Cieia, dated 9th August, 1893. It was accompanied by a rude sketch of a Fijian holding a bible and retreating before an European from whose body were drawn a number of radiations to indicate his pernicious influence:—

[Translation.]

"The Decrease of the Natives.

"I wish, sir, to make a few remarks. There has been much consideration and discussion on this matter. There appears to me to be only one reason for the decrease of the natives. It is the white chiefs who live among us. It is thus:—

"1. They blight us.—They are blighting us, the natives, and we are withering away. It is not possible for a chief to

We take this opportunity of pointing out that the promulgation of this crude theory among the natives is cruel and not devoid of danger. There is ample proof that the first contact of voyagers with indigenous peoples—or people who have been isolated for generations—is fraught with physical danger to the latter; and it is not unnatural that, even without being so prompted, natives should blame the European residents of the present day for the harm that has resulted to the native race through the introduction of foreign epidemics.

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The principal harm, however, is done by the primary contact, and it might end there if native communities could be induced to keep step with the march of civilisation as it reaches them,—and it is impossible in these days to prevent it from reaching them. This, however, they will not do. Their motive power lies entirely in precedent, which in those circumstances cannot help them; and progress from within is thus impossible.

103. We believe that all the epidemic diseases mentioned above (para. 101), together with dysentery and measles, were unknown to Fijians before their contact with foreigners, and that the physical constitution of the race has been undermined by the persistent attacks of these epidemics, which found a virgin soil for their propagation free from circumstances unfavourable to their development.

We think that the presence of foreign bacteria, against which the Fijian's body has neither been habituated by contact nor sheltered by his surroundings, has (in conjunction with the universal prevalence of yaws), shattered the stamina of the present generation and weakened the vitality of their progeny. The great mortality that attends the constantly recurring local epidemics of dysentery, catarrhal influenza, and whooping-cough, indicates—

- (a) The weakness of the individual, or
- (b) The virility of the malady, or
- (c) The inadequacy of the treatment.

All these factors are probably present in each case; but the treatment is the only one that can be coped with, and that, up to the present, has been a matter of great difficulty. Natives will not adopt European methods of prevention and treatment. When urged to do so, they invariably ask, “Why should we do what our fathers never did?” Some Europeans even, from whom more might be expected, adopt the native view of this matter, and, if some specific course of action be recommended, ask, “Why should the lack of these things prevent the increase of the people who must have increased in the old days without such luxuries?”

Both forget, in maintaining these sentiments, that the natives have now to contend with diseases from which their fathers were absolutely free, and that they have to carry on the battle with a vitality diminished by the effects which unchecked foreign epidemics have left on three or four generations of their people.

Natives, therefore, require more careful treatment and nursing than Europeans need for these diseases.

The native mode of life prevents the care of the sick as that is understood by Europeans. The native systems of house-building, bedding, food supply, work by women, care of children, and medical treatment, are practically no better fitted to contend with epidemic diseases than they were a century ago when those diseases were unknown; and we have no hesitation in saying that, until their mode of life in these respects is improved, it will be impossible for natives to encounter European diseases with reasonable chances of survival.

104. The principal remedies which might be applied to effect these improvements consist of—

- Promotion of measures for avoidance of Yaws.
- Improvement of the Condition of Women.

Hygienic

live with his inferiors, to wear the same clothes, or use the same mat, or the same pillow. In a few days the neck or the belly of the low-born man will swell up and he will die, for he has been blighted by his chief.

“It is so with the white chiefs towards us the natives. If we live together with them for long we, the natives of Fiji, will be completely swept away.

“2. They are great and we are insignificant. A plant cannot grow up under a great *ivi* tree, for the great *ivi* over-shadows it, and the grass or plant underneath pines away. It is thus with the chiefs of the great lands who live among us. This is the reason for the decrease of us the Fijians. ‘Let us move gently: we are in the glare of the light.’—(*Fijian proverb*). Let us practise religion.”—JOSEFA SOKOVAGONE.

EPIDEMIC
DISEASES.

Minute by the
Commission.

Hygienic mission by European women.
Change of and improvement in the Food staple.
Provision of Diet for Invalids.
Medical care and nursing.
Improved Sanitation of Villages.
Concentration of Villages.
Establishment of Model Villages.

These will be discussed hereafter.

CONDITION
OF WOMEN.

Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

IV.—CONDITION OF WOMEN.

Digest of Replies.

105. Twenty-three of the sixty-five correspondents dwell at more or less length on the condition of Fijian women as a factor having a most important bearing on the decrease of the population.

It is pointed out,—

- (1) That natives attribute their decrease to the decay of their ancient customs in relation to women,—a change brought about by the advent of Europeans, and the abolition of polygamy :—
 - (a) Fijian girlhood was spent under the strictest surveillance. From puberty to marriage the girl was under the care of older women day and night. This repression is now relaxed and her new freedom has degenerated into license.
 - (b) In by-gone days her elders or relations chose the husband most suitable for her. He was usually the first man with whom she cohabited. Women have now liberty to wed or reject whom they please, and are seldom virgins at marriage.
 - (c) Whether as a chief's concubine or a commoner's wife she received from the midwives of the village the most careful attention during child-birth. After child-birth she was maintained for three months in a separate house, and cared for with her child by three or four women detailed for that purpose. The child was kept at the breast till it was two or three years old, and well able to assimilate solid food, and during the whole of that time the mother lived apart from her husband.
 - (d) The unrestricted association of sexes was looked on as highly improper. "It now leads to anything, everything—but marriage. The young men shuffle off on the old ones the plantation work, and spend their time loafing, smoking, drinking *kava*, and dangling after the women."
- (2) That young women who appear strong and healthy marry, and in the space of a few years become "broken down old hags."
- (3) That a Fijian's idea of a good wife is, to use the words of a Fijian, "*a yalewa dau tei, dau qoli, dau cakacaka*," which is translated "a woman who always plants, always fishes, and always works." The Fijian still treats his women as mere beasts of burden and sexual conveniences as he did in the olden time, except in cases where a plurality of wives enabled them to be better cared for in turn at the times when most necessary. He is now not ashamed to acknowledge that the women are the main workers and the men the drones.
- (4) That Fijian women, being from ancient tradition and practice regarded as mere chattels and slaves, submit to a life of hardship and hard work. They cook, fish, gather and carry firewood, draw water, dig and carry home the food from the plantations, weed gardens, and plait mats for which they have gathered and prepared the material, make and mend nets, and manufacture pottery. They also do much work in connection with *solevus* (festivals) and *boses* (councils) in providing

providing presents of native cloth and other native goods ; and perform a score of other duties from which they have no escape and little respite. Their condition of servitude deprives them of any wish to bear children. A well-provided and well-kept house is far oftener the result of their industry than that of their husbands.

- (5) That the drudgery and hard work of the mothers is most fatal to their infants.
- (6) That the married woman not only keeps her own house supplied, but, if she live in the neighbourhood of a chief, is in frequent demand to go with other women on food-providing expeditions, and to work for his personal aggrandisement, irrespective of her age (within extreme limits), the number of her children, or her maternal condition.
- (7) That the man is nowadays relieved of much of the work (such as fortification and defence) that in olden times made it necessary for the women to help in the heavy labour, and that therefore he should now perform his share.
- (8) That increased leisure is making the man so indolent that he has shifted a great portion of his work to the shoulders of his wife. She is unable to do everything,—result, dearth of proper food, and birth of sickly children.
- (9) That the men spend much of their time in discussing and arranging how tax-work is to be performed, and in going to, and returning from, the scene of their work. From a native point of view all this is work ; and, persuading himself that he has had a hard time of it, the man leaves the cultivation of his gardens, &c., to his wife and family.
- (10) That the fewer the population becomes, the worse will it probably be for the women as regards the labour they have to perform.
- (11) That the outdoor work of the women is often added to by the absence of the men-folk.
- (12) That the absence of the husband from home, working, trading, or perhaps begging for food or gifts for native meetings (*boses*), adds to the work of the women, and prevents the wife from attending to her children as she did in former days.
- (13) That Fijian women often work up to the day of a child's birth, and begin again the same day or the day after.
- (14) That pregnant women have still to carry heavy loads of firewood and water and to fish. Special emphasis is laid upon this statement.
- (15) That incessant drudgery, especially in Vitilevu and parts of Vanua-levu, leaves the women without heart, and is most fatal to their infants. Their power of endurance is overstrained and sapped. They are indifferent to the welfare of their offspring, and regard with disgust the prospect of the addition to their work which is involved in the rearing of a child.
- (16) That being overworked the woman can neither give the attention nor the nutriment necessary for rearing her child. The care of her child is a burden and its death a relief to her.
- (17) That there is truth in the opinion that the Fijian woman works too hard, but not the whole truth. "The work she does was once, and ought to be now, beneficial to her. It is the starvation allowance on which she has to do it that turns what ought to be a blessing into a curse."
- (18) That there is hardly a married woman in the Colony who, under different social conditions and happier circumstances, would not give birth to five or six children.
- (19) That the natural feeling of every woman, born of centuries of degradation, toil, and slavery, is against having more than two or three children.

- (20) That the decline in population is attributable to a want of stamina in the women due to their habits of long-continued fishing, when they are sometimes exposed for many hours at a time with wet clothes round their loins. That fishing is most successfully carried on in stormy weather, and that women are constantly exposed while fishing on the reefs at night. This, it is thought, must produce injurious effects, especially to those who are pregnant.
- (21) That this "dreadful fishing business"—"a body-killing practice," especially the diving for shell-fish at the bottom of rivers—is injurious to the women and their offspring, producing worse results than plantation work. That the decrease of the population in Samoa and Tonga, where the women do little outside work except fishing, is due to this cause.
- (22) That the real question is "Can the mother be won over to care for her child, to do her best to rear it, and not to expect its death?"
- (23) That in the vicinity of one correspondent there are some ten women who have lost from two to eight children each. Talking with them respecting the deaths of their children he utterly failed to produce any serious impression, or make them feel their personal responsibility, or draw from them any expression of regret for their dead children. Fijian women have a hereditary low moral standard, and no moral sense of responsibility.
- (24) That Fijian women have derived great advantages from the introduction of Christianity, but have not practically benefitted to the same extent as the male portion of the race. That considering the time that Christian Missions have been at work in Fiji, the social position which the men allow the women to hold is surprising. Most women can read, many can write and know as much of arithmetic as they are likely to need, but very little of their education is carried into home life. When married the woman must take her place among those of her town or tribe, who will bring her down to their own level. That if, as a young mother, she stays within doors longer than the other women think proper, she becomes the object of their derisive remarks. That consequently 50 per cent. of first children die, and almost as many of second and third children.
- (25) That the Fijian woman "is still the repository of legendary lore, of all that is superstitious, the oracle of omens and mystic signs, the authority on pedigrees and hereditary rights, the medium and perpetrator of family wrongs, prejudices, and blood feuds, a never tiring scatterer of discord and scandal, a consummate dissembler, and ever ready with a proverb to cover or palliate wrong-doing especially where her own kin are concerned." She occupies a very subordinate position but is far from being without power for good or evil. Instances of her influence are constantly occurring, not only in domestic concerns but in communal and more public matters. She is impressible to the best influences from either example or good teaching.
- (26) That the men show an utter disregard for the condition of their women in all the stages of pregnancy and child-birth.
- (27) That native children do not assist their mothers. Even youths of 16 and 18 years of age do nothing but go to school and play.
- (28) That disinclination to marry on the part of the men has very materially lowered the status and value of the woman as a unit in the *mataqali*, and that she is looked upon more as a necessary evil than as the means of reproducing the race and increasing the strength and importance of the family.

- (29) That the women spend all their time gadding about from house to house, idling, and gossiping, to the utter neglect of their children and their household duties.
- (30) That in Rotuma the children are carefully tended after birth, and that their hard work by the women can certainly not be adduced as a cause for the decrease.
- (31) That if strong and healthy women and children of any race were subjected to the same treatment as Fijian women and children, their mortality would be as great as that of the Fijian. "What can a native woman do, with her strange social condition and general surroundings, to tend an infant as an infant should be tended?"
- (32) That it is essential to any possibility of moral improvement in the relations of the sexes that the status of native women should be raised. This is cited as an official opinion.

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Circular.*Minute by the Commission.*Minute by the
Commission.

106. It will be seen from the foregoing Digest of Replies that a majority of the writers who have referred to this phase of the subject believe that (apart from the actual physical injury caused by severe exertion or exposure while fishing during the critical periods of gestation and suckling), the disinclination of the Fijian woman to bear children, her lack of maternal pride, her heedlessness, her levity, her lack of moral tone, are all the direct result of her servile position in society. They regard her as the patient but unwilling drudge, forced to sacrifice her own and her child's health at the will of her worthless husband. The consciousness of degradation has destroyed, they argue, all interest in life, until she has become morally unfitted for any higher role than that assigned to her by her lord.

107. The writers who hold this view have drawn their observations mainly from the western districts of Fiji where the women have for ages been subject to more or less severe agricultural labour. This state of affairs, however, is not uniform throughout the Group.

The writers have not kept in view the fact that while the condition of women varies widely within the Group itself, their moral qualities are probably less defective in the very districts in which women are lowest in the social scale; but this distinction is doubtless attributable more to differences in race than in occupation. A line drawn on the map through the Somosomo Straits towards the south-west, so as to separate Tavuni and the islands of Lau and Lomaiviti from the rest of the Group, would mark the eastern limit of the tribes whose women do field-work. Eastward of this line the great admixture of Polynesian blood introduced from Tonga, where the women do no kind of severe outdoor labour, except fishing, has so far modified the customs of the natives of the windward districts as to exempt the women from the labour of planting food or collecting firewood. In these islands she is employed in light occupations such as fishing, the manufacture of native cloth and mats, fans, and nets, all of which she does from choice rather than from necessity. She enjoys there a relatively high social consideration, and has ample time allowed her for the proper care of her children, yet her levity is even more marked than among her less fortunate sisters to the westward, and her increased leisure shows no very salutary influence on the vital statistics of that portion of the Group.

West of this imaginary line the women certainly do severe labour. In Vanualevu, besides the daily tasks of providing wood and water for the household and of cooking the daily meal, the woman must keep the yam-patch weeded, and must also plant the kawai garden and keep it free from weeds. She is often called upon to go out fishing, and to plait mats for the constantly recurring tribal presentations of property called *solevu*. In the eastern part of Vitilevu she must divide with her husband the care of the plantation, while upon her alone falls the burden of the housework. In the western districts of Vitilevu and in Yasawa the men, after breaking the soil with the digging-stick have little more to do. There the women hoe, plant, and weed the gardens, cut wood, draw water, and cook the meals.

meals. When travelling they carry all the baggage packed upon their backs and their children perched upon the top, while the men walk in front encumbered only with their war fan and the staff that has replaced the spear. Upon the women, too, falls the duty of washing and beating out the *masi* bark, except in the upper valley of the Sigatoka River where this feminine occupation is discharged by the old men while the women are at work in the fields.

108. Our inquiries do not show that, except in so far as their physical fitness has been impaired by the effect of foreign diseases, women in these districts are in a worse position than they were before the introduction of Christianity, but on the contrary, although they have to perform the same degree of agricultural labour, the social estimation in which they are held would seem to have improved. A shrewd observer writing from experience of heathen times, says:—

“Nevertheless, although not an article of trade among themselves, woman is fearfully degraded in Fiji. In many parts of the Group she is as a beast of burden, not exempt from any kind of labour, and forbidden to enter any temple: certain kinds of food she may eat only by sufferance, and that after her husband has finished. In youth, she is the victim of lust, and in old age, of brutality. Such of the young women as are acquainted with the way in which a wife is secured in England, regard it with strong admiration, and envy the favoured women who wed ‘the man to whom their spirit flies.’”*

109. Under such a *regime* a woman fulfilled her duties with the ever-present dread of physical punishment. The standard of conduct may have been low, but it was one that was well within her power, and the penalties that attached to her *lâches*, brutal though they seem to us, were just and fair to her who knew no other state of society. But with the introduction of Christianity she suddenly found herself freed from all such restrictions. Formerly the purity of her relations with young men was preserved: now she is free to respond to their unchaste advances. Formerly fear of violent punishment compelled her obedience to her parents: now she disobeys them and fears violence no more. Then she knew that death might be the penalty for the loss of her virtue: now she knows that at the most she must plait a few mats or beat so many fathoms of *masi*, and be excommunicated if she happen to be a church-member.

Among primitive peoples the loss of the fear of immediate punishment for misdoings is followed by a weakening of the moral fibre. Christianity admonished the women to preserve their chastity and to protect their children, both of which they already did as heathens; but it also removed from them the instant punishment of the club or the fear of sickness if they disobeyed its commands, and threatened them instead with eternal punishment hereafter—avertible by a timely repentance—a contingency too remote to have in itself any controlling influence upon the unstable mind of the native. Able now to throw off some of the restraints of custom, the woman naturally chooses first to defy those which hamper her appetites. Like the males of her generation she has become impatient of parental control, frivolous, licentious. Having but limited means of healthy amusement, she is driven to indulge in the unhealthy excitement of sensuality. While single she prolongs her liberty as far as possible by showing a disinclination for marriage, which would tie her to one man and transform her life from one of frivolity to one of drudgery; for, once married, she cannot abandon field-work, as the men will not undertake it, and without it she would starve. In modern times she is not prevented from excessive indulgence in *yaqona* and tobacco, and she is less careful of herself in the critical stages of pregnancy, lying-in, and suckling, because the restraints of custom have perished, and to be careful would interfere with her inclinations, and provoke the ridicule of her fellows.

110. Yet it is not to be thought that the women of Vitilevu and Vanualevu do their work unwillingly. We Europeans, bred in the chivalrous belief that women, as the weaker vessels, should be spared all severe labour, may perhaps waste sympathy on the Fijian woman who toils homeward bending under a load of firewood, or labouriously weeds the yams on a hillside in the hot sun. Probably no Fijian woman undergoes severer toil than the peasant women in Europe, nor perhaps than the coolie women on a sugar plantation, beside whose attenuated frames

* Williams' "Fiji and the Fijians": page 169.

frames the Fijian shows to such advantage. The Fijian woman is only doing as she has seen her mother do, and a desire to better her condition has probably never entered her brain. Nor is her toil always spiritless. There is generally some emulation among the women of a village in gardening and fishing. The fear of being behind her fellows, and of becoming a butt for their ridicule, spurs a woman to activity.

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111. That there may be cases of physical injury to women in pregnancy while carrying excessive burdens is highly probable, but, taking into consideration the robust frames of the Fijians, these accidents are in all likelihood not more frequent than the slighter accidents to European women in the same condition that suffice to produce miscarriage. The writer of the interesting Paper No. 48, is of opinion that it is not the work that is at fault, but the inadequate and irregular diet with which the Fijian woman of to-day contents herself, and we think that great improvement is possible in this respect. On occasions of ceremony she cannot eat until after the men have finished, and even at other times she must be satisfied with a smaller variety of food than they, for the animal food (*coi ni kakana*) is usually consumed by the men before the remains of the meal are handed over to the women.

by G.A. Peat

112. We do not believe that restrictive legislation to limit the labour of women would be of any service, for, even if it could be enforced, it would have the effect of diminishing the food supply and of affording the women a leisure which, in their present state, they would not turn to advantage. Nor would the women themselves appreciate such a measure. We may mention that in the year 1887 the Resident Commissioner of Colo West, on returning from a Provincial Council with a large body of natives, noticed that the women were carrying heavy packs while the men travelled unencumbered, and compelled them to reverse this arrangement. The women were loudest in their complaints at this interference with their customs. The Native Regulation passed in 1885 to restrict women from carrying burdens has been a dead letter because the duty of prosecuting offenders rests upon native officers who regard such a prohibition as incompatible with their customs, and therefore vexatious and improper.

113. We must not be understood to detract from the great credit due to the missionaries for the success of their work when we say that in partly emancipating women from a condition of servility, and in relaxing the Draconian code under which she was bound, they have not succeeded in their endeavour to give her suitable feminine interests and occupations, and that consequently she has used her increased freedom to become flighty, self-indulgent, and lax in morals. Although this laxity and levity may be found to some extent among the unmarried women of the western districts of Fiji, it is checked after marriage by the necessity for daily toil which fills up their leisure, and in this respect the servile condition of the women of those districts has some compensating advantages. But in Lau, Lomaviti, and Taviuni, the women, subject to no restraint but a weak and capricious public opinion, give way to sexual license in early youth and unfit themselves, morally and physically, for the responsibility of maternity afterwards.

114. As an illustration of native opinion upon this point we cannot forbear from quoting from the evidence of Adi Alisi, a woman of high rank and exceptional intelligence :—

“ Question.—Do the common people recognise the fact that they are decreasing in numbers ?

“ Adi Alisi.—I do not know. We eat and we sleep. We do not cast these things over in our minds as you do. If you ask me I cannot say that the commoners do. The most striking thing to us is that you strangers should interest yourselves in the matter, when you might be looking after your own affairs. There are two things by which we women come to grief in these days, and they are causing us alarm. One is the *viakila* (curiosity), and the other *tagaya* (consternation). Girls in these days want to run about the country and see life, to get fine clothes and satisfy their whims and fancies. Then they become loose women. They are throwing off the old restraints, and have not taken any new thing in their place. Pregnancy often enough follows upon this. Then they are *tagaya* (terrified) lest their friends should scold and abuse them, and they see that they will not have the position or means to provide for the child. Thus all they wish is to get rid of it, and escape the burden of being a mother. We tell such women that they should not listen to the voices of the night, and that then these evils would not overtake them.”

115. We do not intend to infer that the Fijian woman of heathen times was possessed of more solid and sober moral qualities than her descendant of to-day—she was probably quite as frivolous and irresponsible—but she was restrained by the iron walls of custom which allowed her less opportunity for gratifying her lower appetites or neglecting her duties.

The ancient custom of heathen times seems to have recognised this lacuna in the female character and to have provided against it by ceremonial usages that prescribed seclusion of the mother for a stated period after a birth—attention to her wants by the relations of herself and her husband—a light vegetable diet to the exclusion of all heating foods during the lying-in period, abstention from fishing and severe exercise during lactation, and from sexual excitement. The clothing of these customs in semi-superstitious ceremonial secured the regular observance of the code by a people who did nothing by rule or reason.

But on the decay of heathen authority the Fijian mother found herself thrown upon her own responsibility. She had been a mere wheel in a machine compelled to move in its own orbit : she was now an independent intelligence free to move as she would. She who had been allowed neither choice nor responsibility, had now to choose between good and evil, between industry and indolence, and between levity and seriousness. Born without the tie of deep affections, she was suddenly called upon to develop a sense of duty and a spirit of self-sacrifice to take the place of the customs that had cramped her moral development for ages. The process was an inevitable result of the introduction of Christianity. It would be strange if a work fraught with so much good should have been accomplished without bringing some qualifying evil in its train, seeing how sudden and subversive a change it wrought in the habits of the people.

The Missions with admirable perseverance teach both sexes reading and writing and biblical knowledge, but this tuition, useful as it is, does not effectually touch their village life or make them cleaner or more industrious and provident. The native teachers, often it is true, set their people a good example in industry and sober living, but their mission is directed towards the spiritual regeneration of the people rather than their sanitary reform—a work that should properly fall to the Government of the Colony.

116. To make Fijian mothers careful of themselves and of their children we cannot revert to the ancient system of compulsion which ruled the women through the constant dread of physical punishment ; moral suasion only is left to us as a remedy.

To give both sexes a healthy spur to industry, to induce the men to assume the burden of food-providing, to teach the women to employ their increased leisure in the care of their homes, are reforms that cannot be accomplished but by the patient efforts of years of persevering in the face of repeated disappointments.

117. In brief, the Fijian woman was in heathen times the worker, the man the warrior and protector. Their position has been modified by—

- (1) The immigration of Eastern Polynesians ;
- (2) The effect of foreign epidemics ;
- (3) The relaxation of customary law on the introduction of civilised modes of thought ;
- (4) The abolition of Polygamy.

But while the *Pax Britannica* has relieved the men of fighting they have not taken upon themselves any of the field-work which the exigencies of war times had relegated to the women.

To meet these altered conditions, women should in those provinces where they hold that status, be elevated from the position of plantation labourers—a state for which there is no real necessity—not suddenly, but as opportunity allows. The policy of the Government should aim steadily at making the men take their full share of the plantation work, and at instructing the women in their proper feminine occupations.

Epidemics,

Epidemics, to which the race was not formerly liable, have reduced the power of the woman to bear the strain of pregnancy, confinement, and suckling; the relaxation of customary law which prevented cohabitation during the period of dentition has increased that strain; consequently the mothers should be better cared for during those periods.

These measures can best be effected by means of education in sanitary principles, and by the introduction of such an influence as that of the Ladies' Sanitary Mission to which we shall hereinafter refer.

CONDITION
OF WOMEN.

Minute by the
Commission.

V.—COMMUNAL SYSTEM,

With attendant Customs of *Lala* (Tribute and Service to Chiefs and Communes), *Kerekere* (Mutual Appropriation of Property), *Bose* (Councils), and *Solevu* (Feasts or Entertainments consisting of the Presentation of Food and Property).

COMMUNAL
SYSTEM.

Digest of Replies.

Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

118. Twenty-six contributors refer to the system of native communism and its attendant customs, which have always in popular estimation been regarded as in some degree inimical to the welfare, if not to the increase, of the native race. This system, which is to some extent synonymous with the native policy of the Government, has been frequently referred to in criticisms of the colonial authorities, and has been the principal source of contention between the Government and the European Colonists. It was, therefore, almost to be expected that the advice on the subject of the native decrease which the Government sought to obtain from the European community, would, to judge from past experience, be made the occasion of controversy and adverse criticism. The fact that this invitation has not been so regarded by the correspondents, that they have given their candid opinions without regard to party prejudices, indicates the honest concern which they feel in the grave question submitted to them. But it could hardly be hoped that in a company of sixty-five correspondents there should not be one or two to whom controversy was more attractive than the opportunity for furnishing information and giving practical advice.

119. One of these writers isolates himself from the rest in the opening sentence of his Paper (No. 39), which is as follows:—

"1. I venture, respectfully, to express a doubt that the Governor (and the Colony) cannot expect a reliable and independent opinion from many of the persons to whom he has probably directed these circulars to be sent. For instance, Managers of Sugar Estates and Shipping Companies cannot be expected to express their opinion candidly, because it is their interest and their duty to their employers to conciliate the Government and the Civil Servants."

But the writers for the most part do not obscure their advice by the introduction of controversial matter.

120. The Native Communal System established in the Colony is practically a methodical adaptation of that under which the Fijians have lived from time immemorial. It is mentioned by the writers that, before the establishment of settled government, the power of the chiefs was based upon their exercise of "club law." Their influence was paramount, and death was the common punishment for disobedience. As exercised by the old chiefs, this "club law" effectually sufficed to keep in check the animal passions of a rude people. Under civilised government the power of the chiefs is not supported as it was, by the fear of corporal punishment, and their actual authority has waned until it rests only upon the prestige of their hereditary birthright.

121. Another correspondent points out that while among the coast natives all power had, prior to the commencement of authentic Fijian history, lapsed into the hands of certain chiefs who were absolute despots, the mountaineers were independent, and existed as petty republican communities perpetually at war with one another. It is pointed out that the weakness of the existing communal system lies in the fact that it is a mutilated system. Deprived of the element of physical fear the absolute rule of the chiefs has decayed and the system is no longer complete. The individual has lost one stimulus without gaining any other.

122. The effect that this modification has had on the native is variously described. By exempting him from the liability to what he considers to be actual punishment, his sense of personal responsibility is destroyed. Having no need to provide for the future, he is without inducement to exert either mind or body, and places entire dependence in the commune instead of cultivating self-reliance. The communal system, it is said, makes the natives indolent and lazy, because it deprives them of ambition and gives them no means of improving their position owing to the customs of *kerekere* and *lala*. The individual never thinks of the future generation, his governing principles being entirely selfish. The communal system makes the people's lives stagnant, and their lack of personal liberty engenders indifference—the chief cause, it is thought, of the neglect of their children.

123. It is pointed out by one correspondent that not only has the system altered, but that civilisation has also affected the native in his appreciation of the communal system. Formerly the native knew no state save that under which he lived, but in modern times he has seen one in which a man can acquire property and hold it, in which he need render no obedience to chiefs, and the knowledge has made him discontented with his present position. This discontent does not spring from the native policy of the Government, but from the more enlightened condition of the native who is now restive under the control of his chief. He wishes, it is said, to be free to come and go as he will, to work when and where he likes, and to spend or hoard his earnings in his own way.

124. With regard to *lala*, or tribute and service to chiefs and communes, a majority of the writers think that the injustice of the system is concentrated in the tyranny of the chiefs. This representation is not altogether compatible with those just cited, which dwelt upon the great power of the old chiefs and its decay. The people, it is said, thought that annexation to Britain would bring about a cessation of tyranny, and it is believed that possibly a similar idea possessed the chiefs, inasmuch as, for a few years, oppression was actually less than it had been before that time. Oppression by the chiefs, it is alleged, has gradually increased until the people not only groan under it, but in their abject dread of worse, hide their groaning. It is stated that the chiefs are allowed to levy on the people for anything they require. "The service which hurts the people is the continual exactions of the chiefs for their own personal aggrandisement," by which (added to working for the Native Taxes) the men are kept in such perpetual servitude that they have no time to provide sufficient food for their families, and no inclination to attend to their towns, and by which the women have also to render service whether free, child-bearing, or nursing.

125. It is also suggested that this silent discontent is the result of centuries of despotic rule, and that it springs from petty tyranny on the part of *Turaga ni koro* and other minor chiefs. Any serious abuse of power, it is thought, would be heard of in Suva and would be checked, but the people "feel as if they could not call their soul their own" being ever at the beck of some chief whose tyranny is generally in inverse ratio to his rank. It is reported by one correspondent, writing from Cakaudrove, that the people are even fined for ridiculous offences by chiefs of villages. Within the past six years, it is declared, the power of these chiefs has gradually developed out of the communal system, and is now "so tremendously used, and so capriciously," without a thought for the welfare of the people, that the Government should make some change in the native policy to meet it. This and other evils, it is asserted, have crept into the communal system in modern times. It is complained that district meetings pass laws forbidding natives to work for white men, even for a week, without first acquainting the *Buli* with the work to be done and the pay to be received; that chiefs of villages take the men's wages when they return from work, and that when it is subsequently shared there is in every case some portion missing. The farther a village is from the residence of a high chief the more prosperous it is, for these *Turaga ni koro* have more power the nearer they live to a chief's town. One writer (No. 39), quotes and indorses the opinion of a newspaper correspondent, a missionary who wrote thirteen years ago, that the rule of

of chiefs which was always arbitrary and despotic, is now more oppressive than ever. The influence which the chiefs wield, as a factor for the good or evil of the people, is great; but the general character of the individual *Bulis*, it is hinted, is low. "The people are simply the slaves of a few chiefs, ninety-nine per cent. of whom," the writer of Paper No. 39 continues, "are not to be trusted with credit to the extent of £5 sterling." It is also said that much irritation and consequent unrest—factors which greatly affect a Fijian's wellbeing—arise from lack of knowledge, from indiscretion, or from arbitrary assumption of power on the part of native officials in the administration of the authority entrusted to them. But some progress is indicated in the statement of another writer, who mentions that the few chiefs who belong to a past generation—to a race, so to speak, that is dead—are obstacles to any real good being done to the native community; and he doubts if it be possible to make those old chiefs really understand that the welfare of their people, and not their own aggrandisement, should be their first consideration.

126. One correspondent, writing from Cakaudrove, remarks that there has been a change in the relation of the chiefs to the commoners as well as among the commoners themselves. The chief, he says, still expects his dues from the commoners, but fails to make the return that used to be expected and was generally given. [We may here remark that without that return the action is not *lala*, but *vakasaurara*—(oppression)—and is so regarded by all natives.]

127. Some correspondents see in *lala*, which they regard as the extortion of the produce of a man's toil, "the bane of the Fijian's existence" (No. 27); and it is recommended by the writer of Paper No. 39 that "an effort be made to secure the Fijian race from the rapacity of any high (or low) chief who must be bound by law to pay for all his requirements."

It is also the opinion of some that the operation of British law tends to protect the chiefs from reprisals such as would have taken place in the olden time. Then there was a check to the despotism of a chief in the fear that his people might leave him in time of war and go over to the enemy, but that check is now removed. No new check has been established, and the man who complains of oppression obtains neither redress nor protection from the Government, is thenceforth a marked man, and is trebly punished by his incensed chief. This opinion, expressed thirteen years ago, is adopted by the writer of Paper No. 39.

128. It is complained that the chiefs are allowed to interfere too much in the people's domestic life, *e.g.*, to periodically inspect the interior of their houses, and cut up and burn utensils and mats because they are not new at their visit. It is therefore urged that the people be left more to themselves, and that the chiefs of villages in particular should be deprived of every vestige of authority. [We think it probable that the writer was misinformed as to the reason that prompted the destruction of the mats referred to.]

The difficulty of punishing chiefs who unduly exercise their right of *lala* is adverted to by one correspondent. "The imprisonment of a hereditary chief, no matter how great his tyranny, would be felt and grieved over as the imprisonment of the father of the people, while fines would be paid by the people themselves by a secret levy." The suggested form of punishment is deportation.

129. After *lala*—or perhaps before it—*kerekere* (the mutual appropriation of property) is the principal feature of the communal system. One writer, while remarking the seeming incongruity of the assertion in these days when everything seems tending to some form of communism, is convinced that communism—or *lala* and *kerekere*—as now carried on, is disastrous to the race. It deprives the native of all incentive to individual exertion and identity, and prevents the industrious man from deriving benefit from his work. So handicapped, he can only sink lower and lower, year by year possessing less property and less food, quantities of which the system of *kerekere* causes to be used unripe. The perpetuation of the communal system keeps the people in their primitive state, thus checking their advancement; and, despairing of advancing, they, it is alleged, become apathetic as to whether they live or die. A native has thus no incentive either to work, or to marry, for the former brings him no benefit, and the latter but increases his labour.

A native, it is said, hardly owns anything, and has only partial control over his own family, for his wife may be ordered to go fishing or to perform other communal work, while his children are more under the orders of the chief than of their parents.

130. A good deal is said about the bearing of the communal system upon native industry. If a man acquire anything, he cannot retain it. It is *lavaka'd* by his chief, or *kerekere'd* by any relative. The former he cannot deny from fear of punishment, and the latter he must appease for custom's sake. Consequently the people do not plant nowadays more than is absolutely necessary. [This writer loses sight of the fact that, when they did plant more in the old days, it was done in consequence of the greater exercise of the same chiefly *lala* now inveighed against.]

131. On the subject of *bose* or councils, there is rather a diversity of opinion. One writer complains that, whereas in the days of "club law," the chiefs directed and controlled everything, now all is left to a *bose*, which means delay and division of responsibility, and also the curtailing of the executive power of the chiefs. On the other hand, it is pointed out that the chiefs are not men of sufficient probity to be depended on as the governing units, and that consequently the system of *booses* is the only one at present practicable. But, it is complained, these *booses* are too numerous and subdivided.

132. Another correspondent of wide experience urges that greater recognition should be given to the monthly village and district councils. They are, he remarks the only form of gatherings left to the people; in them the direct voice of the people is heard, and through them the executive orders, to be effectual, must be given. It is also thought that wives and mothers may through this channel be most easily induced to strive to rear their offspring and throw off the careless and indifferent spirit of the age.

It is also mentioned by other writers that Fijians regard the attendance on councils as work entitling them to a rest, and that the *booses* create much work for women in providing the food, but especially the presents for those attending them.

133. During the past decade in the small group of Yasawa Islands, the population—about 2,200,—has increased from year to year almost without intermission. One correspondent accounts for this by the fact, that the *tabu* on cocoanuts is never so strict in Yasawa as elsewhere, being only allowed by the consent of the whole community. No chief in Yasawa has sufficient power, either hereditary or from prestige, to enforce any order without the approval of a majority of the people. Their old system of *booses* (councils) is still intact, and in them the whole community decides the work to be done and the manner of its execution. A Yasawa chief always addresses his people in the mildest manner as, "Now my friends," or "children," invariably using the inclusive form of the plural of the first personal pronoun. "Thus there is seldom any disagreement or irritation in those communities."

134. *Solevu* (feasts, or entertainments, consisting of the presentation of food and property), are an accompaniment of the communal system. The custom of holding continually recurring *solevu* is condemned by some of the writers. They are said to produce illness in the participants, who invariably gorge themselves, and they reduce the entertainers to poverty and starvation. The gardens of the guests are neglected during their absence at the *solevu*, which leads to further privation, especially prejudicial to females and infants. One correspondent instances a village in his vicinity where, at the time of writing, 150 people from another island had been present for a fortnight at a *solevu*. This, he thinks, must cause unhealthy overcrowding in the village, and subsequent scarcity of food. It is also pointed out that the recurrence of these *solevu* causes a large amount of work to the women who have to make the native cloth, mats, nets, &c., for the occasion. The absence of the men working, trading, or begging for food or gifts for *solevu*, also throws an additional amount of outdoor labour on the women.

There is also more travelling about in boats to *solevu* than was formerly the case, and it is thought that the conditions arising from that state of affairs interfere with the attention which mothers should give to their children.

135. Oppression is frequently felt and privations endured by communities in providing the price of too large a vessel or of too many vessels. The raising of such moneys necessitates the people's abstention from the use of cocoanuts as food, and deprives them of the oil and clothes which under ordinary circumstances would be procured by the sale of copra. Growing food is often sold in order to raise money for this purpose. Much of this unnecessary expenditure is caused by the rivalry of tribes and chiefs as to the size of their cutters.

136. Another charge brought against the communal system is that it fosters the consanguinity of the people by continuing the traditions of intertribal marriage. The perpetuation of this system, it is said, will end sooner or later in total extinction.

Again, it is said, the communal system is diametrically opposed to the growth or existence of home-life among the people.

137. The foregoing statements are in the main put forward as arguments for the abolition of the communal system. Some writers state their belief that neither the form and policy of the Government, nor the existing political condition of the country has any connection with the question under discussion, and one points out that it has been customary all over the world to blame the Government for any national defect of which the cause did not lie on the surface. It has thus been stated that the preservation of the communal system is the actual cause of the native decrease, but it is pointed out that in the neighbouring group of Tonga, where people lived under similar communal institutions to those in vogue in Fiji, the communal system, which, as in Fiji, took the place of local rates and provided the people with houses and food and with the power of combination for the public good, was abolished thirty-one years ago, with the result that, although the country is naturally richer than Fiji, the Tongans are now as a rule miserably poor, impatient of government, discontented, restless, distrustful of one another, and often living in hovels which a Fijian would be ashamed to own. The men being able to please themselves choose not to work, and their families are consequently in actual want of food for some months every year. As regards the ensuing vitality of the people, it is shown that for the last two-and-a-quarter years there has been a decrease equal to 27.61 per mille in a population of 19,196.

138. The remedies suggested, as likely to overcome the demerits alleged by some of the correspondents, for the most part take the shape of proposals to cut off particular features of the existing communal system. The opinions of such of the correspondents as advocate any change in the system may be briefly summarised as follows :—

- (1) Curtail the power of the chiefs.
- (2) Abrogate the system of *kerekere*.
- (3) Modify the custom of *solevus*.
- (4) On the utility of *bozes* the opinion is divided.

139. Some of the writers, while agreeing that the power of the chiefs is abused, hesitate to counsel the emancipation of the people from their rule. By one it is pointed out that the abolition of the chiefs' right to *lala* would be unjust as well as impolitic. One writer on the other hand (Paper No. 39), thinks the policy of the Government to be a grievously mistaken one, and that it is the chief cause of the continuance of excessive native mortality. This writer, and those who agree with him, desire to see the communal system, or at least the custom of *lala* abolished. In connection with the subjects of *lala* and *kerekere*, we have thus the following suggestions :—

- (1) That the people be protected from the *lala* of the chiefs.
- (2) That the magistrates in each province be made Resident Commissioners, and that it be part of their duty to report to the Governor every case of *lala* made by any chief, with an expression of opinion as to whether it is legitimate.
- (3) That an "effort be made to elevate the masses."

- (4) That a feeling of individuality and self-reliance be established in the mind of the Fijian, together with a desire to acquire property and save money independent of chiefly interference; and that each individual be secured in the fruits of his industry, so that his property cannot be taken away from him without compensation.

It is also suggested that—

- (1) If natives were gradually emancipated from their communal customs, and had more personal liberty, they would take more interest in their home lives. Independence would result in rivalry between individuals, and each man would take more care of his possessions, his wife, and his children.
- (2) That as an active measure of relief a modified feudal system, with lords of the manor and their yeomen, might be established. The Government, it is suggested, should provide manors, and transplant thereto deserving natives from different places, giving to each a piece of land under service tenure. Make mortgage or sale of land impossible, abrogate the customs of *lala* and *kerekere*, encourage raising of stock, &c., and, it is thought, the people's endurance and their perseverance in steady work would improve as the labourer found that his exertion was for his own sole benefit.

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140. Most of the correspondents view this subject solely from the standpoint of modern civilisation, many having an idea that whatever is not in accordance with that system must be forcibly dragged into line with it before it can possibly be considered effective. But the state of modern civilisation shows that there is some great imperfection in society as at present constituted, containing as it does many individuals who have more property than they can profitably use, and many also who have not enough to maintain existence, a condition of things which gives rise to disputes that threaten to terminate the system itself. The present civilisation must in most respects be regarded as merely in process of development. The position of the upper class in the European system, once founded upon hereditary rank, is now in great measure based on the possession of wealth. The relation of the servant to the master has passed through the successive stages of slavery, serfdom, and wage-earning, and is gradually tending towards profit-sharing and co-operation. Modern civilisation may ultimately attain perfection, although what it will then resemble is not now known, but there is room for believing that the goal to which it is tending is a position not far removed from the communal system of the Fijians. As the European system is thus in a state of transition it can hardly be taken as an unimpeachable model on which that of the Fijian should be moulded.

Lala, or Tribute and Service to Chiefs and Communes.

141. The writers who bring against the communal system the accusation that it is the cause of the decrease of the population generally declare that the minds of the natives are affected with a widespread discontent induced by the oppression of their chiefs, who are said to habitually abuse the rights of service-tenure known as *lala*. It is unnecessary for us here to recapitulate the grounds of economy and expediency that required the Colonial Government to recognise the hereditary powers of the chiefs and to convert them into civil officers having, under due restrictions, executive control over their people. The system instituted at Cession, with but slight modification, is still in force; and, making allowance for the defects to which every social system—even the most highly civilised—is liable, we cannot but record our opinion that it has been a marked success. The chiefs exercise their functions by means of the *lala*, a term that has been denounced as “legalised robbery,” and which seems to be generally associated in the public mind with the idea of authorised oppression. To clear away any misconception upon

upon this point it will be well to state to what extent the exercise of *lala* is authorised by law. By Native Regulation No. 4 of 1877, amended by No. 7 of 1892, it is limited to house-building, planting gardens, roadmaking, feeding strangers, cutting and building canoes, turtle fishing, and the observance of any Resolution of the Provincial or District Council that has received the written assent of the Governor. The exercise of *lala* is limited to the *Roko Tui* of a province or the *Buli* of a district, and the penalty for disregarding their lawful commands is a fine not exceeding two shillings, or fourteen days' imprisonment in default, with a slightly increased penalty for a subsequent offence.

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142. At the date of Cession there were in fact two distinct forms of *lala*. The first, which we shall call "Personal *Lala*," was the payment of tribute or service to the more powerful chiefs by their tenants; the second, which we shall refer to as "Communal *Lala*," was the exaction of tribute or service to, or on behalf of, the commune, by order of the chief or of a council of elders, who in this respect were merely the mouthpiece or representatives of the community at large. It is necessary to draw a clear line of distinction between personal and communal *lala*, because, while the latter was universal throughout Fiji, the former was limited to those tribes in which the chief had rights in the land distinct from those of the people, and also because the two forms of *lala* originated in totally different institutions, and are by no means confounded in the native mind. None of the numerous writers on this subject have dwelt upon communal *lala*; they appear to think that the word *lala* signifies exclusively the personal service rendered to chiefs.

143. *Personal Lala*.—Among no primitive people in the world, perhaps, is found so great a diversity of institutions in relation to Land as among the Fijians. The group is the meeting ground of the Polynesians, who have generally a ruling aristocracy, and the so-called Melanesians, whose institutions are republican and do not admit the supremacy of powerful chiefs. Among the Melanesians, generally, the waste lands of the tribe are held in common, the chiefs having no landed interest in them apart from their people. But among the Tongans, who are the branch of the Polynesian family that has migrated to Fiji, the chiefs have acquired rights in the soil that approach very nearly the manorial rights of feudal tenure. In those districts of Fiji in which there is an admixture of Polynesian blood, that is to say, the coastal districts of the eastern portion of the Group, the chief is admitted to greater or less privileges distinct from his people, while among the tribes of central and western Vitilevu, whose blood is more purely Melanesian, he is rather in the position of the president of a republic, holding no hereditary rights over the soil exceeding those of any other member of the tribe. Among these latter tribes which include the natives of the provinces of Ba, Yasawa, Nadi, Navosa, Ra, Serua, a large portion of Nadroga, and part of Colo East, personal *lala* by the chief was practically unknown.

144. The researches of the Commission for investigating the boundaries of the native lands have ascertained the fact that personal *lala* was as much a landed interest as rent paid to the modern landlord. The conditions of tenure, varying in each district with the stage reached in tribal development, enable us to trace with some approach to accuracy the growth of *lala* from its origin as property in land to its recognition as a precise and settled institution.

145. The chiefs of the Fijians are the representatives of the blood of the common ancestor in its purest form. The tendency of most primitive peoples is to deify their ancestors, and thus the persons of the chiefs were hedged about with increasing reverence, until, although of common origin with their people, they claimed a descent distinct from them, and even aspired to trace their ancestry from the gods whose earthly career had been forgotten in the lapse of time. The land was held in common, but as the chief's influence increased his control over the waste lands of the tribe, especially those near the border, became more and more definite, because upon them he settled the fugitives from broken tribes who put themselves under his protection. These tenants acknowledged their dependency by the only means in their power—by giving their services and a portion of their crops. In
this

this way a warlike tribe became the centre of a confederation, and the chief, though always related to the inferiors of his own tribe, was of an origin distinct from the dependent tribes who paid him tribute. His own tribe were elevated together with their chief in so far as to be spared many of the services rendered by the conquered tribes, which his own people would otherwise have paid him.

146. Besides the common land appropriated by the chief for the use of fugitives under his protection, he acquired a lien upon the lands of the conquered. A common form of capitulation was the presentation of a basket of earth. The direct claim which this symbol established was not the absolute proprietorship of the soil but the right to the crops grown upon it, and the services of the people nourished by it, in short the right to *lala*. The principal commodity of old Fiji was food. Land had no value except in so far as it produced food, and, therefore, the mere possession of it was not coveted unless there were inferiors living on it as cultivators. By degrees, therefore, the chief's interest in the land became merged in the right to order gardens to be planted by the subject tribes, or to demand services from them in housebuilding or contributions for the entertainment of visiting strangers.

The chiefs also acquired a title by having cocoanuts planted out for them in suitable places by the owners of the soil, and by giving out pigs to be fed for them in a system closely resembling the Saer-stock tenancy of the Brehon law tracts of the Irish Celts.

147. The instances that have been brought to our notice in confirmation of this view of the nature of personal *lala* are too numerous to give here. It is enough to say that the high chiefs of the larger confederations seldom claim the absolute proprietorship of any land, but admit that the land is vested in the people subject to the usual tribute. We could wish that the Native Regulations had defined the rights to personal service with greater precision, but this was prevented by the necessity for passing a law of universal application throughout the Colony though the customs differed in almost every province, and also in part by insufficient knowledge of these customs at the time the Regulations were framed. The only instance in which the overlord's interest in the land is precisely defined is to be found in section 4 of Regulation No. 5 of 1881, in which 40 per cent. of the rents of lands leased to Europeans is to be given to the *Turaga i taukei*,—a status that exists in all the powerful confederations, but which is unknown among the tribes of Melanesian origin in western Vitilevu.

148. We must under this head refer very briefly to the *lala* exercised in virtue of the tenancy called *cokovaki* common on the delta of the Rewa River. There the play of relations between the chief and his subjects has been reduced to a more precise system, and a kind of cottier tenancy has been evolved. In Noco, where individual tenancy obtains, and the succession to holdings is not necessarily hereditary, the chiefs have the right of evicting their tenants if the rent in kind is not duly paid. During the investigations of the Native Lands Commission in that district of Rewa province, no case was found in which the tenant would consent to abandon his rights as perpetual tenant in order to be relieved of the payment of tribute attached to his holding, even though he possessed more land of his own than he could possibly use. Old associations and the earth-hunger that possesses every Fijian are strong enough to outweigh any disinclination he may have to a regular acknowledgment of his chief's right to levy contributions on him by *lala*.

149. Ancient custom—confirmed by Native Regulation—requires that the person who enjoys the benefit of *lala* shall provide a feast (called the *vakaoco*) for those who give him their services, and this feast is felt by the workers to be a sufficient recognition of their labour. *Lala* exacted without the *vakaoco* is felt to be an improper exercise of authority. After very careful inquiry we find that the statement that there is universal discontent throughout the Colony at the oppressive government of the chiefs is exaggerated. We think it certain that a measure of discontent exists in certain districts, but it is confined to those provinces whose chiefs exercise their ancient rights to excess, or fail to observe the reciprocal obligation of *vakaoco*. It is a significant fact that, although the people have largely

largely lost their fear of lodging complaints against their chiefs, a great majority of the complaints that are made allege misappropriation or wrongful division of moneys or land, while a very few indeed are based upon abuse of the *lala*. The fact is that *lala* by a hereditary chief, unless pushed to great excess, is not considered a hardship by a Fijian. When the Government has subjected a chief to discipline without first receiving a complaint the people have declared the interference to be uncalled for, and have petitioned the Governor to remit the punishment. It is noticeable that the writers who speak of discontent are principally gentlemen connected with Taviumi and Vanualevu, a great part of which is under the control of a young chief who was recently suspended from office among other things for abuse of the *lala*. We are satisfied that throughout the central and western portions of Vitilevu, Kadavu, Yasawa, and Lau—that is the largest portion of the Colony—no real discontent exists, and that in the provinces ruled by a chief with sufficient power and influence to abuse the *lala*, the reported discontent is rather in the nature of grumbling at the inexorable regularity of the call for tax and communal work than expressed discontent at the *lala* of the chief, for punctual recurrence is peculiarly abhorrent to the desultory mind of the Fijian. These grumbings, which are not thought worthy of embodiment in formal complaints, naturally reach the ears of the Europeans in the district, to whom they are quoted as excuses for the non-performance of promises or for disinclination to work. In those provinces where there is discontent at the exactions of the chiefs, the persons who complain are those over whom the hereditary right to *lala* does not extend, and not those who are the natural tenants of the chief's estates. Over the former class the *lala* has been exercised with impropriety.

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150. While we do not think that the *lala* is generally pushed beyond its legitimate uses, yet, when it is exercised without the performance of its reciprocal obligations of *vakaoco*, or in the execution of work for Europeans, it becomes—not “legalised robbery,” for it is illegal—but oppression. And seeing how lately the chiefs have emerged from the enjoyment of absolute power, and how the temptations laid in their way by the introduction of money have increased, it would be unreasonable to expect from them an entire freedom from errors, when even in our own civilised society the rich take advantage of the poor, the strong of the weak, the shrewd of the simple. Yet it is surprising how little they have abused their position.

With few exceptions, neither the *Bulis* nor *Turaga ni koros* have sufficient influence to grossly abuse the *lala* for their private advantage: their people would refuse to perform labour which they knew to be illegally requisitioned, and a conviction for disobedience under such circumstances could not be obtained before the District Court. The abuses of the *lala* that have formed the subject of complaint have been the acts of *Roko Tui*, who have used the *lala* for raising produce for sale to Europeans, or for the collection of money for the purchase and repair of private vessels, and from people who were not their hereditary tenants. The younger chiefs who hold this office are men of some education, and their desire to live in a style beyond their means forms a strong temptation to them to increase their income by the abuse of their power.

151. A form of exaction is practised by the higher chiefs that is rather a distortion of the custom of *kerekere* than an abuse of the *lala*. Chiefs of high rank, holding no office that allows them to use the *lala*, visit villages upon which the *vase* or hereditary influence gives them a special claim, and ask for anything that takes their fancy. In this way villages are occasionally swept of everything of value. The people are fully aware of their legal right to refuse, but the ties of custom are stronger than their independence. They give their labour or their property with an outward show of liberality, and vent their mortification in grumbling among themselves and to neighbouring Europeans. In 1887 a Stipendiary Magistrate offered to interfere on behalf of certain natives of Koro thus despoiled by one of the Bau chiefs, but the natives themselves begged him to take no action, saying that it was their custom to give whatever their chiefs asked, and that their grumbling to the Europeans who had given the information meant nothing. In this instance they could

* Extract from report of Native Land Commissioners (B. H. Thompson and J. R. Frewell) Oct. 1893.
C.S.O. 3494 Part 6. "It will thus be seen that the nuances of tribal tenure in the large confederations are somewhat delicate. But one fact stands out clearly, that the right of personal *lala* does not exist unless the chief exercising it is overlord of the soil. *Lala* is in fact, as much a landed interest as rent, or the fine paid to the lord by the successor to a copyhold in England. This view is borne out by the fact that among the tribes of the interior who do not admit that the chief has any superior landed interest, personal *lala* is practically unknown. It would thus appear that 54 personal *lala*, when exercised by native officers in virtue only of their official position, is repugnant to native ideas."

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could not have been actuated by fear of the chief's resentment, for he belonged to another province, and had no official relations with them.

The curious custom of *Veitavuu*, though not due to the influence or authority of chiefs, has also sometimes the effect of stripping a village of all movable property. The people of two villages, who, though now widely separated, formerly had the same gods and were therefore of common origin, are said to be *veitavuu*, and have the privilege, when visiting one another, of killing the domestic animals, stripping the food-gardens, and appropriating all chattel property belonging to their hosts. The tie of *veitavuu* seems to survive the wreck of most of their old traditions. We think this custom of spoliation should be forbidden by legislative enactment.

152. We are of opinion that personal *lala* is an interest in land.* The chiefs of the large confederations have acquired it partly by appropriating the common lands of the tribes, and partly by the conquest or protection of the weaker tribes who go to make up their confederations. If this seems to constitute but a slender title to so marked a privilege as *lala*, it should be remembered that the largest landed proprietors in England have come by their property in no more regular and legitimate a fashion. Until the appointment of the Copyhold Commission some of the landed interests in England were quite as antiquated and divergent from modern ideas as *lala*. Yet among those who advocate that property in land should be transferred from the landlord to the State there are few who propose to make the change except upon the basis of fair compensation to the landlords. When the British Government accepted the Cession of these islands this right was a fundamental element of the common law of the native population, and it is a recognised principle of modern legislation, that no measure injuriously affecting the interests of a class shall be enacted without providing for the fair compensation of the body so affected.

It is generally forgotten that the law now provides for the commutation of the rights of *lala*. Section 4 of Regulation No. 4 of 1877 enacts that—"If any town shall desire to commute its *lala* work due to any chief for a fixed annual payment in money or in kind, and such chief shall have accepted such commutation with the Governor's sanction, the right of *lala* cannot again be resumed by him. A record of all such commutations shall be kept in the Native Affairs Office." Although many native communities receive large incomes from rents and surplus taxes, no instance of any village expressing its desire to so commute its service obligations has occurred during the sixteen years in which the Regulation has been in force. If the people felt the *lala* to be oppressive they would not have hesitated to tender the trifling annual payment that would free them from its exactions. The reason for this is that the produce exacted by the chief's *lala* is not supposed to be devoted to his sole personal benefit, but to become a kind of public store for the tribe, any member of which may eat in the chief's kitchen or may obtain from the chief enough food or property to satisfy his immediate needs. In Tonga, although the chiefs have lost the right of *lala*, they have not escaped from the equivalent obligation of supplying the wants of their people.

153. We are, however, so far from being averse to the universal abolition, upon the principle of fair compensation, of all forms of *lala*, except strictly communal services, that we recommend that a scheme of permanent indemnification be laid before the people.

In Tonga, on the abolition of the personal right of *lala*, the chiefs were compensated by being made lords of the manor over large tracts of land which yielded a fixed rental from every native occupying them, and from every European settler to whom the landlord chose to lease land. The Crown collected all rents and paid them over to the landlords, who, however, had no right of eviction. The tenants held their lands on hereditary tenure, and default in the payment of rent was visited with distraint instead of eviction. This system was possible in Tonga because in ancient times the land there was regarded as the property of the spiritual chief, the Tui Tonga, who could thus be made to grant manors to his inferior chiefs without doing violence to native ideas; but in Fiji, where the rights of the Crown have

never

never been insisted on, and the land is for the most part vested in the commune, such a scheme would be impracticable. COMMUNAL
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154. The scheme might take the form of annual pecuniary compensation in lieu of all personal *lala* as now provided by law, or, in those districts in which land is likely to be rented by Europeans, portions of the communal land might be vested absolutely in the chief, who would have the power to lease, but not to sell, his holding. The economic effect of such an arrangement would be to throw open to settlement on easy terms considerable areas of native land in various parts of the Colony, for the chief would eagerly welcome tenants who would yield him an income in lieu of the services of his people. While many of the chiefs would gladly accept such commutation, we much doubt whether the people, superabundant though their land is, would consent to part with any portion of it for an equivalent so slender in their estimation as immunity from personal services. The system might, however, be first tried in a single province as an experiment; and, in view of the growing tendency towards the subdivision of the communal lands among individuals, the province selected should be one of those in which the proprietary unit is still the commune. If the natives should look coldly upon such a scheme after it has been fairly laid before them, and the total abolition of personal *lala* upon the basis of pecuniary compensation should still be desired by the European public, it would seem fair that those who urge this extreme course should bear the cost of that compensation without which the measure would be in the highest degree unjust. Minute by the
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We think it highly probable, however, that the people would for some time continue to give their services voluntarily to their chief, whose prestige would remain unimpaired notwithstanding any legislative restrictions that might be brought into force after compensation had been made.

155. In the meantime we think that the right of personal *lala* should be more strictly defined by Regulation, and that it should not be given indiscriminately to the official chiefs of districts not personally entitled to it. The line separating it from communal *lala* should be as clearly defined in law as it is in the native mind. Perhaps the best means of ensuring the equitable exercise of *lala* would be to make the offence of *talaidredre* (disobedience) cognisable only by the Provincial Court presided over by an European magistrate instead of, as at present, by a Native magistrate sitting alone.

We are further of opinion that, when the right of personal *lala* has been by Regulation restricted to those by whom it should properly be exercised, a register should be opened into which should be entered, on proof, the names of all chiefs having the right of personal *lala*, and the names of all *matagalis* and lands over which that right may be exercised, with particulars of the nature and extent of the right.

156. *Communal Lala*.—*Lala* in its Communal aspect is the axis of the primitive commonwealth. A native cannot of himself build his house or till his garden, and he has no money with which to pay others for doing so. He applies to the chief, who summons the community to his assistance. He in his turn will be called upon to help each of his neighbours. Communal *lala* is indispensable for the performance of all public works such as road-making and the weeding of the village square, and in this respect corresponds with our local rates. Without it the character of the natives' houses, already bad, would become worse; their crops, already diminished, would become insufficient for their support; the villages, often now neglected, would become unfit for habitation; and the ownership and maintenance of boats and vessels would become impossible. In its communal application the *lala* may be compared to the *corvée* of Egypt or the *rajakaria* of Ceylon, without their evils. It is true that the orders issued from the chief, but in this respect he was simply acting as the mouthpiece of the commune, and among the smaller communities he gave no orders for communal services without the approval of an executive council consisting of the elders of the people. Communal *lala* is exercised in practically the same manner at the present time. Measures are usually discussed at a village or district council, and on the result of the discussion the chief gives the fiat. The only innovation on the old custom is the application

application by the Government of the principle of communal *lala* to the execution of sanitary measures.

157. Communal *lala* is not sufficiently resorted to for the welfare of the people, who do not attend to the sanitation of their villages as these require. The orders for communal work of this nature cause probably more grumbling than the services paid to the chiefs. The people do not see the necessity of weeding their road (for they only require a 12-inch track), or of cleaning their village squares, unless on the occasion of some function, and their grievance naturally evaporates in adverse criticism of the orders given.

158. Some £5,000 is spent annually by the natives in the purchase and repair of vessels owned in common. It is claimed that the collection of this money is felt to be burdensome and causes discontent. We do not find this to be the case. The money is not levied until the Provincial Council (in the case of a provincial vessel) or the District Council (in the case of a district vessel) has resolved to collect it, and the resolution has received the sanction of the Government upon the recommendation of the Native Commissioner. Sanction is never accorded in cases in which the levy appears likely to put an undue burden upon the people. In the provincial vessels the people at large have little interest, for they are at the disposal of the *Rokos*, who show a disposition to regard them as their private yachts; but in the district and especially the village boats the people enjoy an ample return for their subscriptions. For this reason the purchase of village boats has largely increased of late years. The collection of money for the purchase of boats does not produce discontent, and in view of the spur to activity that it affords, and the impetus to a useful branch of colonial industry which it gives, we do not think that any restriction is called for beyond that already applied. The danger of the custom lies in another direction. With increased facilities for travelling there is growing up a practice on the part of both men and women of leaving their homes to wander from island to island in the village boat, begging their food from the people they visit, and leaving their families to take care of themselves. It is to be feared that the unbounded opportunity for lounging afforded by this increasing custom will so affect the food-supply, and consequently the chance of survival of infants, as to counter-balance any advantages of opportunity for marriage into distant tribes that may result from it.

Another aspect of communal *lala* is exemplified in connection with *solevus* or festivals. On the occasion of *solevus*, communes are certainly in the habit of devoting far more food and property to the entertainment of their guests than they can afford, and the burden of providing these feasts falls unduly on the women. But, now that *solevus* will no longer be accompaniments of the native councils, we think that the evil will abate without the need for further interference. In connection with the feeding of strangers much food is undoubtedly wasted, but the waste is more the fault of the community than of the *lala* by means of which the food is collected.

159. In all other respects we regard communal *lala* as being as necessary for the wellbeing of the people as are local rates in civilised communities, and as being far less vexatious than the imposition of rates in money would be.

Among the Tongan community resident in the Lau province communal *lala* has fallen into disuse, but the necessity for combination is so keenly felt that the people, men and women, have voluntarily formed themselves into clubs called *kabani* (company) under various fanciful names which combine, under the direction of an elected president, in building or repairing houses, planting gardens and other communal work. Disobedience to the order of the president is visited by a money fine, or even with loss of membership. A person who belonged to no *kabani* could obtain no assistance from his fellows.

Kerekere (Mutual Appropriation of Property).

160. As the term "Communal System" may be somewhat misleading, it will be well here to estimate to what extent communism really exists among the Fijians. They do not, as the phrase would imply, hold all property in common, nor have

have they probably ever done so since their arrival in the islands. Their land, it is true, is not all, except in the provinces of Lau, part of Lomaiviti, and some districts of Rewa, apportioned out among individuals, but the cocoanut and other fruit trees are generally the recognised property of him who planted them or of his heirs. Pigs and domestic poultry are held individually, and the ownership is jealously guarded, the poultry being marked in various ways to secure identification; and native manufactures of all kinds are the individual property of the reputed owner. But while individual rights are thus far recognised the claims of the tribe and of relationship are so strong as to constitute a lien upon all individual property. A man who would rigorously prosecute another for stealing his pig, will not feel aggrieved if called upon by communal *lala* to kill it himself to provide food for visitors to his village, even though they be unwelcome, nor will he think of refusing any of his possessions to a fellow-townsmen, consoling himself with the reflection that the gift affords him a claim upon the borrower at some future time. The wealth of a Fijian consists not in the amount of his property but in the number of the friends from whom he can beg.

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This system is probably the first stage of evolution from the state in which the proprietary unit was the tribe, and it is difficult to imagine how primitive society could exist without some such custom as communal *lala* and *kerekere* within the limits of the clan. So long as usage prescribed an universal standard of industry the system worked well enough; it is only with the decay of the stimulus of fear that it has become mutilated. Now that each individual can indulge his natural indolence, the more industrious have no longer any incentive to industry, knowing that whatever they accumulate will be preyed upon by their more idle relatives. Fear of public opinion and want of independence prevent the richer native from refusing what is asked of him, though he may know that the recipient of his bounty is too idle and thriftless to be ever in a position to yield him an equivalent.

161. A native of Deuba, who makes a net income of some £250 a year from his banana plantation, and has money deposited in the bank, asked, not many months ago, whether the Government would not make the custom of *kerekere* illegal so as to furnish him with an excuse for refusing to give money away. He said that unless this were done he would always be ashamed to refuse money to his unfortunate relatives, and that he could only save his profits by depositing them in the bank and declaring that he had none. It is worth recording that when we mentioned this to three witnesses from Bau, without giving the man's name, they at once identified him with Sakease whose wealth and niggardly spirit appeared to be notorious.

162. In the few cases in which Fijians have shown sufficient independence to defy the importunities of their friends, they have been made the victims of a kind of organised boycott, well calculated to deter others from attempting to follow their example. We may quote the case of Tauyasa of Naselai, who had a banana plantation, and paid coolies and natives to work for him. He so prospered by his industry that he was able to buy a cutter and a horse, and furniture for his house. To the chiefs who flattered him, and the host of idle relations who wanted to live upon him, he turned a deaf ear and obstinately refused to part with his property. They retaliated by circulating infamous stories about him, and by ridiculing him with the taunt that he was aspiring beyond his station and was trying to ape his superiors,—a reproach that is of all imputations the hardest for a Fijian to bear. The worry of this petty persecution preyed upon his mind, and brought on an illness to which he succumbed. But not even his memory was allowed to rest in peace, for the Mission teacher who preached on the Sunday following his death described him as “squirring (*moqemoqe*) in unquenchable flames” for having shipped bananas on the Sabbath.

Instances might be multiplied of the resentment shown by Fijians against any of their number who tries to improve his position, or accumulate property, by braving the ridicule of those who would beg of him.

163. The idea that it is only necessary to abolish the power of the chiefs to secure to every native the fruit of his industry appears to be widely spread. That this is not so is proved by the example of the Tongans, who, being a less conservative people than the Fijians, are more inclined towards social progress. The powers of the chiefs were there abolished by law in 1862, but, during the thirty years that have elapsed, the principal result of the change has been to impoverish the chiefs without enriching the people, while the loss of combination for mutual assistance has deprived them of the power of building any but houses of the poorest description. The majority, as with the Fijians, being naturally indolent, are interested in preserving the ancient right of begging property from a relation, and the encouragement towards accumulation of savings that should result from the recognition of personal property by the law is checked and nullified by the fixed determination of the idle majority to live upon the industrious minority, and the moral cowardice of the latter in not resisting this organised spoliation. No less in Tonga than in Fiji is ridicule the most effective weapon of intimidation. The people are enslaved to a more unsparing despotism than the tyranny of chiefs—the ridicule of their fellows.

164. While the baneful custom of *kerekere* wars unceasingly against the mercantile progress of the people the conditions of native life offer no incentive towards the accumulation of property or the development of new wants. Nearly all the necessaries of life are produced equally in every village, and so there is no spur to the acquisition of money except the desire for some particular luxury. When a native takes produce to the market it is from no abstract desire for possession of money; he has in his mind a definite object on which the proceeds are to be spent. If he has no such object he will let the surplus product of his garden or his net decay rather than undergo the trouble of taking it to the market. When he does offer his produce for sale he is not influenced by the laws of demand and supply; he has fixed in his own mind a price for his fish or taro, and rather than take less he will perhaps consume them himself, or leave them to rot upon the beach.

165. To give the natives an incentive to industry, to create new wants and a desire for improvement, time is necessary; but we think that the process of development might be hastened if means could be devised for checking the custom of *kerekere*. The example of the people of Deuba, who make considerable incomes from their banana plantations, may in time be followed in other parts of the Colony, and the people may then begin to gain sufficient independence to protect themselves from the demands of importunate relatives, but Fijians are so imbued with the feeling that one man ought not to be richer than another that we fear such a reform cannot be hoped for in the immediate future.

Bose (Councils).

166. So far from believing that the native councils are too numerous we think that serious executive difficulties would follow the reduction of their number. The Fijians now enjoy a large measure of self-government. A monthly district council, attended by all the chiefs of villages and heads of families, provides for the discussion of all matters of concern to the natives. A report of the meeting is sent by the *Buli* to the *Roko Tui*, who forwards it to the Native Commissioner if the importance of the questions seems to require this course. The half-yearly Provincial Council is attended by the Native Commissioner or his representative, by all the *Bulis* of the province, and by a number of chiefs of villages and heads of families. All matters referred from the district council are there discussed, and each *Buli* is required to make a report of the affairs of his district. The resolutions of this council are submitted to the Governor for approval, and it may be said that almost no executive order affecting the natives is made without the previous discussion and recommendation of the Provincial Council.

167. The system of government by local councils is not a creation of the British Government. Before the Cession of the Colony, none of the chiefs governed without the aid and counsel of their tributary chiefs, and among the small republican

republican tribes of Vitilevu every family was represented at the meeting, which directed the labours and defence of the commune. Among a people so disposed to the *cacoethes loquendi* as the Fijians, it would, in our opinion, be highly impolitic to deprive them of any measure of self-government, especially as the hands of the executive are so much strengthened by the recommendation of the local councils.

We believe that, so far from having any effect towards the decrease of the population, the *Bose* must be regarded as a ready means of carrying out such sanitary improvements as may be devised by the central government.

Solevu (Feasts or Entertainments consisting of the Presentation of Food and Property).

168. There were in former times various reasons for *solevu*. Help given by allies entitled them to a *solevu* from the succoured; the death of a high chief gave his relatives a claim upon the subject tribes; quarter given by a victorious army placed the vanquished under a like obligation; a marriage entitled the relatives of the woman to gifts from the bridegroom's people; or, if none of these excuses could be found, and some commodity such as salt was urgently needed, a *solevu* was invited on the understanding that it would be returned. The ceremonial of these presentations varied with the local custom; the merchandise presented depended upon the local productions, but in every case the donors carried their wares to the village of the recipients upon an appointed day, presented them with due ceremony, and were lavishly feasted during their visit, which lasted several days, according to the importance of the occasion. After the departure of the visitors the merchandise was apportioned out among the members of the tribe according to rank. The same process would be repeated when the *solevu* was returned, generally at the interval of some months, sometimes after the lapse of several years.

169. The *solevu* was properly encouraged by Sir Arthur Gordon upon the ground that it would form a substitute for commerce until the natives should become better accustomed to money as a medium of exchange, and that it was inseparable from the quasi-communal institutions in which the race had been reared. It was felt that, without the *solevu*, the manufacture of native commodities such as mats, pottery, salt, native cloth, sinnet, wooden bowls, &c., would fall into disuse, and the material comfort of the lower orders be affected for the worse. It accordingly became usual for a *solevu* to take place in conjunction with the half-yearly Provincial Councils, at which each district became in rotation the entertainers of the people attending the council. Upon the district chosen fell the burden of building new houses—a very salutary requirement—of providing food (*magiti*) for a large concourse of people for several days, and of manufacturing an immense quantity of mats, *masi*, and *seavu* (bark cloth), or other native productions. The emulation of the districts to outdo one another in hospitality caused them to bring pressure to bear upon their people, the chief burden of which fell upon the women whose especial duty it was to produce the commodities required. In return, the entertainers would theoretically be entitled to a share of the property presented by their guests on arrival, and of that given at other councils when the turn of playing host fell upon others; but of late years, in the provinces ruled by powerful chiefs, very little of the chattel property reached the lower orders, the lion's share being absorbed by the chiefs who attended the council. There can be no doubt that *solevu* in conjunction with Provincial Councils were a great burden, and pressed with especial weight upon the women. They had also lost much of their native character. At a *solevu* held at Deuba the property given consisted exclusively of kerosene, tins of biscuits, and other European commodities bought in Suva; while at Rewa a cutter filled to the hatches with cases of kerosene formed the contribution of the Toga district. *Solevu* were conducted on a far larger scale, and with greater frequency, than in the period before Cession, when they were exchanged, at long intervals, between members of a single tribe, instead of between the districts of a modern province. It is therefore with satisfaction that we record the fact that in June, 1892, the Governor formally forbade the interchange of

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of property at Provincial Councils. This interdiction has been welcomed by the people at large as a much-needed relief. We submit our belief that the prohibition might with advantage be extended to the Annual Meeting of Chiefs.

170. The profusion of food at the larger councils is often enormous. As many as 160 pigs and six thousand yams and taro are consumed at a single Provincial Council, while the extravagant prodigality at the Annual Meeting of Chiefs often reached ten times that amount. But, since the necessity for planting large reserves of food for the requirements of these councils secures the natives against sudden scarcity caused by floods, hurricanes, or droughts, and since, if the necessity were removed, it is more than probable that they would cease to plant sufficient for their bare needs, we do not think that any executive interference with the feasts (*magiti*) is called for.

171. When abolishing the *solevu* as an adjunct to the Provincial Council, His Excellency directed that the Annual Meeting of Chiefs should consider the advantages of instituting a system of intertribal barter in local markets which would be in better accordance with modern notions of trade than the *solevu*. The chiefs, however, could not be induced to take any interest in the proposal. Their attachment to the primitive *solevu* is not due to the necessity for barter, but rather to the more or less elaborate ceremonial and display so dear to the native mind, which is inseparable from the occasion, and to the fact that at the council *solevu* they obtained the principal share of the property without being required to furnish an equivalent.

172. Yet the Fijians are by no means wanting in the mercantile instinct. Long before they came into contact with Europeans they traded among themselves by barter both directly and indirectly. As an instance of direct trading we may mention the custom of the coast people at Lekutu, in Bua, of bartering fish and salt with the hill people for vegetable produce. There were regular market-places, and the barter took place at stated intervals. In Kadavu, a single household or tribal sept having a store of *masi* or some other commodity would invite another, who possessed some coveted article, to trade with them, and on the appointed day would visit their village and deliver their property, receiving in exchange cooked food as well as the wares they needed. Similar institutions prevailed in Vitilevu between the natives of the coast and the mountaineers. These customs were called *tago* or *veisa*.

The growing use of money has developed side by side with a system of traffic in native produce, not only with European buyers but among the natives *inter se*. Natives of the coastal districts of Tailevu, who are required periodically to take contributions of food to Bau on the occasion of some ceremonial without expecting any remuneration, at the same time carry on a regular trade with their chiefs in Bau, hawking vegetables or fowls from house to house for money or its equivalent in European articles. Thus they draw a clear line of distinction between *lala* and barter.

173. From an unreasoning conservatism the Fijian dislikes change, and will passively resist any ordered amendment in his customs (giving, however, more heed to laws forbidding than to those enjoining the performance of any act). Many Europeans, on the other hand, wish to see the prevailing form of native society broken up so as to be rid of its abuses and to confer on the Fijian the benefit of individual liberty as appreciated by them. But as we are convinced that native society cannot retrace its steps to the industry-compelling customs of the old times, and that the people are now in a state of transition which removes any fear of their standing still, we recommend that the natural evolution of the race should be facilitated without being forced.

Conclusions.

174. Our conclusions under this head are :—

- (1) That the proper exercise of authority by the chiefs has no bearing on the decrease of the people; but that exactions in the nature of personal *lala* by chiefs not entitled to it, or over people who are under

no

- no tenantry obligation to them, undoubtedly induces a sense of oppression inimical to all progress.
- (2) That the rights to personal *lala* should be registered, and that its exercise should be restricted to those entitled to it.
- (3) That the private rights of *lala* on the part of chiefs can only be abolished, with justice, on the principle of compensation, and that a scheme of compensation on the basis of grants of land or money might be submitted to the people of a single province as an experiment.
- (4) That the *lala* for communal purposes, as a substitute for local rates, is indispensable for the building of houses, for sanitation, and other public services, and, as at present exercised, has no bearing on the decrease of the population.
- (5) That every effort should be made to discourage the system of *kerekere* which will always tend to retard the development of the people.
- (6) That *solevu* should be allowed to fall into desuetude, or at least should receive no encouragement from the Government.

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VI.—SEXUAL DEPRAVITY.

*Digest of Replies.*SEXUAL
DEPRAVITY.Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

175. It is asserted by eight writers that sexual immorality has largely increased among the natives since the abandonment of the ancient penalties attaching to such vices, and that the decrease in population may be attributed in a great measure to this cause. The race has not, it is admitted by most of the writers on the subject, undergone a deterioration of moral fibre, for the inclinations of the people were perhaps no less depraved formerly than they are now, but the relaxation of the penalties commonly known as "club law" has induced a license from which they were formerly restrained by fear. The principal evil cited as resulting from this laxity is the debauchery of young girls before they have arrived at puberty, which produces organic weakness and consequent lack of stamina in the offspring. Increasing license is moreover declared to be responsible for the practice of abortion: young girls, in their anxiety to conceal the results of their indiscretions, procuring abortion by drugs, or foeticide by rough operations, destroy their powers of bearing healthy offspring. The sexual relations of the Fijians are even described as "promiscuous intercourse," and it is added by one writer that science teaches that universal promiscuous intercourse would result in the destruction of the race by neglect of offspring and universal sterility. Laxity of morals after marriage results in quarrels and early separation, and the women (more open in the indulgence of their appetites than before) have recourse to abortion to relieve themselves of the incumbrance of children. The number of married couples thus living apart is declared to be seriously increasing.

It is further stated that the license among married women leads them to neglect their home duties, which interfere with "their guilty pleasures," and that infant mortality is the direct result. Two writers also point to unnatural practices as a factor bearing upon the virility of the male.

176. The causes given for the present laxity of morals are the effects of climate, the natural indolence of the people, and the survival of the custom of heathen times; but the writer who suggests this explanation implies that, bad as it is, the morality of the Fijians has slightly improved under Christian teaching. Another writer, while indorsing the statement that the debauchery of immature girls is prevalent, does not hold the opinion that the immorality of Fijian women is so general as is often represented. The writers who assert that immorality is increasing, among whom is included one of the Wesleyan missionaries, declare that in heathen times chastity was enforced by the penalty of death, and that the relaxation of this fear of physical punishment is responsible for the change. Another cause adduced is the lack of healthy outlet for the energies of the young men, who, deprived of the emulation and excitement of war, devote their ingenuity

ingenuity to devising sexual intrigues. One writer points to the example of unchastity set by the chiefs as the immediate cause of an increased sexual license which he regards as the most serious evil the Government can legislate upon; and another indicates as a cause the low moral standard of the Colony evidenced by the fact that persons, European and native, who lead notoriously immoral lives suffer no degree of social ostracism.

177. There is a difference of opinion as regards the extent of sexual depravity. While one writer appears to regard the depravity of the women as exaggerated, there is a large balance of testimony to the effect that the license between the sexes is widespread and general. One writer believes that a native girl who has retained her chastity after fourteen years of age is the exception. Another, a gentleman of wide experience of the natives, thinks that only a minority of the females have retained their chastity at marriage, and that the husband has ceased to look for virginity in his bride. The only remedy suggested is a more rigorous application of the penalties for fornication, a subject which we deal with in another part of this Report.

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178. The native witnesses examined by us confirm the statement that the sexual morality of the Fijians has changed for the worse since heathen times. The children of Fijian parents have their ears exposed from early childhood to all the coarse conversation of their elders. Scandal forms the chief theme of conversation among natives, and the humour most appreciated by them is of a prurient nature. As the native house consists of only one room the children hear all that passes. Thus, as they grow up, any inborn delicacy they may have is blunted if not destroyed.

179. In ancient times, while boys and girls associated freely during the day, and played outdoor games such as *veibili* and *sosovi* together, they were rigidly kept apart during the night time. The girls slept with their mother, and the boys, before they had attained puberty, were compelled to sleep in the *bure ni sa** of the village. The girls were so carefully watched that they seem generally to have retained their chastity until marriage, and the young men, occupied with the training proper to their age, having no opportunity for sexual intrigue, were rarely profligate. Fear of the vengeance of the girl's relatives seems to have played a considerable part in the preservation of chastity. As soon as the man's beard was grown he married, and the tendency towards salacity was removed. The women, it is true, not infrequently practised after marriage a laxity of morals unknown to them before.

180. With the introduction of Christianity came a change in the habits of the people. Sexual license, formerly prevented, was now only forbidden. The *bure ni sa* was gradually deserted and the youths slept in the houses of the village in close proximity to the women. This seems to have been the outcome of the endeavour of the Missions to inculcate "family life,"—an unexpected effect being the decay of social morality. The association of the young men and women developed the sexual instinct. Violence being abolished, the youths began to throw off parental control, and follow their inclinations with impunity.

All our native witnesses agreed that in the present day probably half at least of the young girls surrender their virtue before marriage, often at a very early age. They are usually seduced by full-grown men it was said, and not by the boys at school as was implied in a recent resolution of the Council of Chiefs. The young men acquire loose habits as soon as they have attained puberty; their ingenuity, formerly directed to more worthy objects, is now exercised in endeavouring to seduce the young women. The ordinary native house affords the women no privacy. Young men and women often spend most of the moonlight nights in dancing together, and sexual license often accompanies these dances. Witnesses agree that the dances of school children (*meke ni wilivola*), which bring together the youth

* A house in which unmarried men and strangers sleep.

youth of several villages, are made the occasion for dissoluteness as soon as the young people are out of reach of the native teachers.

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Though the girls do not appear to fear suspicion attaching to their chastity, they undoubtedly dread the disgrace which follows the discovery of their pregnancy. It is to avoid such exposures that they have resort to means to procure abortion, but habitual profligacy seems to be so seldom followed by pregnancy that this fear does not act as a deterrent.* One of our native witnesses mentioned that girls who have been deflowered before puberty retain their youthful appearance long beyond the usual period.

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181. It has been observed, in Paper No. 61, that the nervous system of the adult native is curious and contradictory. It cannot be doubted that irregularity and premature excitement of the generative organs of girls has an injurious effect upon their fecundity. Fijian girls seem moreover to be peculiarly neurotic in this particular, with a somewhat unusual result. The firm belief which natives have in the danger of being what they term *dogai*, and the numerous instances of girls and youths who have sickened and died after the sudden discovery and disruption of an amorous intrigue, point to the occurrence of a more profound mental shock than might be expected in people of their generally unimpressionable character.

Dr. Compton

182. While we indorse in the main the views of the writers upon the subject of sexual depravity, our inquiries do not show that a state of public morality so low as promiscuous sexual intercourse exists, or that the Fijians show a disregard for chastity equal to that found in other groups of Polynesia or among most of the savage races of mankind. The very disgrace and fear of exposure referred to by the writers as motives for procuring abortion show that chastity, however rare, is held in some estimation, and that immorality is so far condemned as to be visited by social disabilities.

183. Of several malpractices other than ordinary illicit intercourse between youths and girls, fornication in later life, and adultery, it is plain that some forms exist. But instances seldom gain publicity. We are, however, far from believing that they occur with the frequency that some of the replies to the Circular would indicate, or that they have any material weight in determining the number of the population.

184. Whether it be due to the greater opportunity for the gratification of the men's passions afforded by a lax tone among the females generally, or to an absence of natural appetite, it is a somewhat remarkable fact that there is little professional prostitution among the Fijians, except in the rare cases of women living permanently in the European towns of Suva and Levuka. Women accept presents from their paramours, but hardly a case is known of a woman selling her favours to all comers.

185. We understand that, with a view of checking incentives to immorality, the Wesleyan Mission have prohibited the practice by the members of their church of such customs as *veiqia* (tattooing) *veikoti* and *veibena* (hair cutting and hair dressing between the sexes, unless married) and others.

186. To summarise our conclusions under this head we believe—

- (1) That the early sexual immorality of young girls injuriously affects their fecundity.
- (2) That the incontinence of unmarried women is the main cause of the practice of abortion.
- (3) That sexual license after marriage causes the separation of married couples in numerous cases.
- (4) That in all other respects the sexual license of the Fijians is less than is found in many races who are increasing in numbers, but that the effect of such license is greater owing to the native woman's fear of detection leading to the practice of abortion.

We

* "In hoc loco notandum est Vitienses profecto credere nullam feminam ex uno coitu gravidam fieri, ultroque hy-menem ruptum sarciri posse quibusdam herbis maceratis et immissis. Itaque virgines, quum ad coitum sollicitantur, facilius concedunt."

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We shall discuss at length the question of penal enactments against immorality. We do not believe that such laws can do much towards making a people moral. The main hope of improvement must lie in the better education and culture of the young.

Besides penal laws the only measure that might have a direct effect in checking the sexual immorality of the young would be the re-establishment of the *bure ni sa*, or men's sleeping-house, in which the men would remain from nightfall to sunrise, instead of sleeping in the houses with the women. We fear, however, that after so long a discontinuance such a measure would be impracticable.

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VII.—PREMATURE CIVILISATION.

*Digest of Replies.*Digest of
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187. To say, as thirteen writers have said, that the decrease of the native population is owing to the sudden foisting upon a primitive oriental people utterly unprepared to receive it of the social system of Western Europe, which has gradually crystallised into fixed laws through the evolution of centuries, is to include in the widest classification many of the reasons adduced for the decrease. The Reverend Walter Lawry, one of the pioneer missionaries to the South Seas, thought he foresaw that the teaching of Christianity and the inculcation of the customs of western civilisation, while raising the individual character of the natives, would ultimately result in their extinction as a nation. He regarded this event as the retributive justice of Providence for the idolatry and bloodshed of heathen times, but he indicated with considerable acumen that the instrument by which this punishment would be brought about would be the introduction of a milder code combined with the absence of necessity as a spur to industry.

188. The state of things foretold by Mr. Lawry seems to be in operation. Its evolution in detail is ably described by the writer of Paper No. 48. He dwells upon the natural gulf of misunderstanding set between the white race and the black, upon the hardship of savage life, the continual dread of death or of famine, redeemed by the physical labour which these entailed—never excessive but always sufficient to keep the savage in health. He denies the universal application of the term “blessings of civilisation,” pointing out truly enough that the savage does not aspire to civilised standards, because he regards many of the artificial conditions of civilised life as vexations rather than blessings, and welcomes only those that enable him to support life with less labour. While, therefore, the civilised man armed with labour-saving contrivances still does enough to keep him in health, the savage devotes the same contrivances to increase his already ample leisure. Thus civilisation, which it was believed would in some obscure way benefit the savage, has turned him into a sickly idler. Another writer points out that the ancient Fijian beliefs and superstitions were peculiarly suited to the condition of the people. The dread of witchcraft forced them to keep their houses and villages scrupulously clean for fear of affording by offal left unburied the means required by a secret enemy to work his spells. The early missionaries, it is said, had too fixed and narrow a moral standard, and, instead of seeking to engraft reforms upon the old stock, were satisfied with nothing less than the sudden abolition of the beliefs and customs in which the people had been bred. The Fijians had been kept healthy in body and mind by physical fear, not only of witchcraft but of the summary penalties of “club law” if they were disobedient to their chiefs. “Club law” restrained their passions, but with its abolition the chiefs were powerless to check the flood of immorality that ensued. The penalties provided in its place have no terror for the Fijian, for prison entails no disgrace and little inconvenience, and, besides death, the only penalty he fears is corporal punishment. In abandoning their old customs, the Fijians stop short of adopting such European methods as might be of benefit to them, because the example of runaway convicts and deserters from ships, the spectacle of rivalry between religious sects, and national jealousies as shown on the visits of ships of war, have destroyed their confidence in the superiority of the European, and confirmed them

them in the retention of their own opinions. Thus the critical period of transition is prolonged. The present state of the Fijian is neither savage nor civilised. Security from violence has fostered his natural improvidence. Protected from his enemies, he fails to recognise the dangers no less real, if more insidious, of partial civilisation. The Missions which have wrought so great a change for the better sought to affect the moral and religious emotions of the native rather than to improve his health, his constitution, and his physical wellbeing. They made him devote part of his time to mental culture, and gave him tools which still further reduced the necessity for bodily exertion, enabling him to shirk healthy toil, and bringing upon him the ills endured by the higher classes of old-world society—indolence, self-indulgence, ennui, lax morality, ill-health—without their wealth, comfort, and courage. The effect, the same writer continues, is that the able-bodied Fijian of to-day shuffles off on his elders all necessary labour, and does no steady work at all except it be on the plantation or in the gaol, both of which have an invaluable disciplinary influence on him, morally and physically. But while several writers deplore the abolition of the stern penalties of "club law," one correspondent declares that a severe moral code administered by the missionaries has a disastrous effect upon the vitality of native races, and quotes the cases of Strong's Island and Ascension in the Caroline Group. The people of the former having been for twenty-eight years under the control of the American Board of Missions are stated to have decreased from 5,000 to about 200, while those of the latter, having resisted missionary influence, and being free to follow their exceedingly lax code of morals, have suffered no diminution.

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189. Another writer declares that the Christianity of the Fijian is a thin veneer, under which all the vicious inclinations of his nature are indulged unchecked. No instances are given of unsuitable European habits adopted in place of the abandoned customs of ancient times. The complaint is rather that, having abandoned his own methods, the Fijian is slow to adopt the superior usages of civilisation. One writer deplores the tenacity with which the Fijian clings to his old beliefs. For many of his present evils he cannot be blamed since they are the direct result of the period of transition. The time he devotes to amusements is excessive, but, the writer points out, if Europeans had to make no provision for their old age or their families, they would probably exercise as little self-denial.

190. There is no difference of opinion as to the remedies to be applied. It is impossible to check the process of transition, or to control it within the channels of gradual evolution, for any such check must needs take the form of retrogression, and the natives are too closely associated with Europeans to permit of their advance being retarded. Education of the commoners, it is said, will take many generations, but to it alone can we look for the cure for the evils of indolence and ennui that are the results of the period of transition. Without it the progress towards civilisation will mean the adoption of the vices of civilisation only and a certain loss of vitality.

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191. It is somewhat too readily assumed that the ancient system of the Fijians was wholly evil. In seeing how admirably adapted many of the old superstitions and *tabus* were for securing sanitation and cleanliness, moral and physical, one is led to wonder whether they were half-forgotten survivals of a code brought by their ancestors from the land of their origin, the work of some forgotten Lawgiver, or merely a gradual evolution from experience, coloured by superstition. What could better secure the sanitation of villages than the fear of *draunikau* which taught the people to destroy or bury all scraps or offal for fear of affording an instrument for witchcraft? The towns are no longer swept clean, for Christianity threatens them with no immediate physical punishment for being dirty, and they have not yet come to believe that dirt breeds the germs of disease. How could the proper nourishment of young children in a country destitute of milk and farinaceous diet be better ensured than by the fear

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fear that intercourse between the parents during lactation would impoverish the mother's milk and injure the child? In these days the custom of abstinence is decaying, so that the mother is again pregnant before her child is fit to assimilate solid food, and she must either continue to nourish the child within her and the child at the breast, to the detriment of both, or prematurely wean the latter to the certain injury of its health. How could the sexual morality of the people be better guarded than by shutting up all the unmarried men at night-fall within the *bure ni sa*, and placing all the girls under the protection of their parents; by training the young men in the emulation of arms and seamanship until they were old enough to marry; by making death the penalty of the loss of virtue; by constituting the absence of virginity in a bride a sufficient cause for withholding the dowry, or even by holding up an unchaste bride to the ridicule of the community through the mutilation of the cooked pig presented by the bridegroom's people at the feast given after the marriage? But the *bure ni sa* was an institution of heathen times, and boys and girls are now thrown together as they are in civilised communities; there is no more war nor other spur to emulation among the young men, they now find their excitement in sensuality, and the loss of virtue if discovered entails only consequences which can be borne with equanimity, so far at least as the men are concerned.

192. We thus have evidence of an earlier existence so far civilised that it was at least possible for the people to increase. But the customs of that civilisation were so marred by the first arrival of Europeans and the consequent introduction of firearms that the early missionaries were called upon to witness a state of perpetual war, cannibalism, and barbarity, under which no people could increase, and a social system that could not be tolerated.

193. The social system of the Fijians, as has been said, is no longer a complete one. It is mutilated. A great part of the system has been demolished, and a recollection is all that remains of the broken-down customs. Their demolition could hardly be avoided. Most of them were in some way connected with heathen superstitions. Many of them had even been degraded by the Europeans with whom the natives came first into contact, and their eradication by the first missionaries was a matter of necessity. If they were not incompatible with the acceptance of Christianity by the natives, their existence interfered with mission-work, or their discontinuance established a convenient line of demarcation between the Christians and the heathen. By some the missionaries will be accused of abolishing too many of the native customs, while others will blame them for not destroying more of them. There can be no doubt that it would have been found impossible to graft the principles, sentiments, refinements, usages, or arts of modern civilisation on many of these ancient customs. The work of demolition having begun must continue. Meanwhile, the consequence to the Fijian is injurious. The people have been slow to adopt foreign habits, and they have been for a generation progressing on the stumps of their old customs assisted by fragments of European innovations. The place in the polity of the people that was filled by the abolished heathen customs has not yet been occupied by civilised sentiments; and the outcome of the change is a general make-shift mode of existence upon which it is difficult to make any impression. The native now comforts himself with the consideration that this is the era of mixed customs. As he is at all times the creature of circumstances, the passing condition of things induces in him a complacent feeling of lack of permanence, which affects his whole family life, and blunts his sense of responsibility for his children's welfare.

194. The native has suffered from the fact that civilisation was not forced upon him. If, instead of being ceded, the country had been annexed and the people conquered, and each relegated to his place with a strong hand, the dawn of settled government would have been less bleak. History shows that civilisations established in this manner have been the most successful; and, among the Fijians, experience indicates that in inculcating a civilisation the *suaviter in modo* may be a more dangerous process than the *fortiter in re*.

195. Natives were accustomed to be ruled with a strong hand. The custom had not arisen without a cause, for no other rule was possible. Although at the present time the native is no longer a heathen but a Christian, he is a Christian with all a savage's casual instincts. He yet looks back to his fathers as models to be followed in most of the affairs of life, despising foreign methods and new ways, but he is without the spur of fear and necessity that forced his fathers to a measure of industry. They were subject to a severe code of custom which they perforce complied with, but he is ruled by the milder precepts of Christianity which do not compel obedience. Until the lapse of time reclaims the native from his natural waywardness, selfishness, and heedlessness, by the assimilation and consolidation of what he has been taught, he will suffer from this transition.

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196. On the other hand, it has to be recorded that the native has in great measure adopted certain of the tools and utensils of civilisation; the native system of navigation has given place to boats and vessels of European model; and, so far as he requires it, he has generally adopted clothing of European manufacture. We are told, however, that the tools have made him lazy and inert, and that he abuses the possession of clothing and boats and vessels. But it cannot be forgotten that the Native Taxation System has provided him with a certain amount of beneficial work, while the acquisition of European comforts entails profitable exertion. Our native witnesses believed that the breaking down of native conservatism has begun. Bau, it is said, is adopting European fashions—that is, of course, the superficial ones that take the fancy. Where Bau leads, others will in time follow.

197. The growth of sentiment in the mind of the Fijian has been marvellous. He has submitted to, and joined in, the suppression of such customs as polygamy, cannibalism, strangling of widows, and such minor practices as cutting off the finger in mourning, the heathen fashions of wearing the hair and the loin bandage, tattooing, and many others; and his mind has been so far reformed, that at the present day it would be difficult to find a more honest or more law-abiding community than the Fijians, so far as intercourse among themselves is concerned.

But his sympathies are not yet wide enough to allow him to think of others. Many an otherwise excellent native will, with a clear conscience, lie to and cheat a foreigner. Or if his pig strays he will take steps to prevent a recurrence by piercing its eyes with thorns, or throwing quicklime into them, so as to blind the animal. His sentiments have not had time to solidify, and consequently his sympathies do not reach up to the foreigner or down to the lower animals.

198. A considerable part of the work of Government will in future consist in directing the progress of the natives along given lines, and in restraining their advance in undesirable directions.

We may well apply to ourselves the remarks of Sir Henry Maine upon the native policy of the Government of India. We, too, are “like men bound to make their watches keep true time in two longitudes at once. Nevertheless the paradoxical position must be accepted. If they are too slow there will be no improvement. If they are too fast there will be no security.”

199. The blessings of the *Pax Britannica* are enormous, but they are the gifts of civilisation least appreciated by a semi-savage community whose life was formerly full of excitement and is now almost intolerably dull. In urging the natives to hurry into the lists of commercial competition, we may be inclined to overrate the value of material prosperity, and to overlook the “intangible moral forces that shake the community below the surface.”

200. There is no reason for lack of hope in accomplishing the civilisation of the natives of Fiji, especially when we remember the low estimate in which the ancient inhabitants of Britain were held by the Romans in the time of Cicero. The Orator writing to his friend Atticus, recommends him not to procure his slaves from Britain, “Because they are so stupid and utterly incapable of being taught that they are unfit to form a part of the household of Atticus.”

In most respects the Fijians are a few centuries behind us; but it is not necessary that they should follow in the tortuous way that has led to modern civilisation.

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It is necessary, however, if the race is to be saved, that it should attain to modern sanitary standards. We will endeavour in the following Report to mark out the way in which we think this should be arrived at.

WANT OF
VIRILITY.

VIII.—WANT OF VIRILITY.

Digest of Replies.

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201. Fourteen correspondents suggest an inherent lack of virility in the race itself as the true cause of the infant mortality, and of the decrease of the population. Their views may be summarised as follows :—

- (1) That physiologists show that a race may fall into a decline like an individual, and that the Fijian race as a whole is so affected, and is unable to supply its loss by mortality.
- (2) That the lack of stamina may proceed from the taint of scrofula that pervades the race, and from the after effects of yaws.
- (3) That the symptoms of want of virility shown by the Fijians are sterility and lack of stamina in the women, who seldom give birth to more than two healthy children; the growing disproportion of the sexes owing to the increasing female mortality; a low vital power in the children from birth; the inability to resist trifling ailments; a kind of fatalism that destroys all hope of recovery as soon as they are attacked by illness; and a decrease in robustness during the period in which the race has been under the observation of Europeans.
- (4) One writer believes that the Fijians have become poor, miserable, degraded, and degenerate, owing to the form of government under which they are placed.

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202. Want of virility is attributed to the Fijian in two respects :—

- (1) Inability to procreate his species.
- (2) Lack of power to resist disease.

With regard to the first head it has been said that Fijian women seldom give birth to more than two or three children. But the high birth-rate which has been maintained from year to year shows that the lack of vitality does not lie in that direction. The birth-rate for each of the past eleven years has been as follows :—

1881	...	...	...	40·68 per mille.
1882	...	...	...	37·19 "
1883	...	...	...	38·46 "
1884	...	...	...	36·98 "
1885	...	...	...	38·90 "
1886	...	...	...	35·71 "
1887	...	...	...	40·10 "
1888	...	...	...	40·19 "
1889	...	...	...	36·24 "
1890	...	...	...	35·91 "
1891	...	...	...	35·54 "

The mean annual rate for the whole period is 38·48. The mean annual rate in England is 35·3. Other European countries vary from 42·8 (Hungary) to 25·9 (France).

If the population was actually lower than that recorded—which appears to have been the case—the birth-rate would, of course, be higher than is represented in the foregoing figures.

203. The native witnesses gave several instances of large families, some of them with a minimum number of deaths; and, as this phase of the subject is one in which some interest has been exhibited, we have ascertained that in the twelve towns

towns of which the Census was taken by the Commission there were the following number of large families, viz. :—

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Families in which 9 children had been born of the marriage, 2

“	“	8	“	“	“	12
“	“	7	“	“	“	20
“	“	6	“	“	“	35

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Thus sixty-nine families or 15·4 per cent. of those enumerated had had six children or more born in them.

204. The number of living and dead in these large families is shown hereunder :—

	No. of Families.	Children.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.
Families of 9 children,	2	10	8	18
“ 8 “	12	45	51	96
“ 7 “	20	63	77	140
“ 6 “	35	110	100	210
Total	69	228	236	464
Average	...	3·30	3·43	6·73
Proportion per centum	...	49·01	50·09	100

205. The number of survivors in these large families (3·30 per family) is considerably higher than the general average (1·52), but the proportion per cent. of children remaining alive (49·1) is a trifle lower than the general average (51·5).

In the case of these large families rather more than one-half of the children born have died, while it was found with respect to the whole enumeration that rather more than one-half of the children of existing marriages were saved.

206. The divisions in respect of consanguinity to which these large families belong and the number of the children surviving and dead in the respective divisions are as follows :—

Division.	Number of Families.	Number of Children.	
		Alive.	Dead.
<i>Veidavolani</i> ...	27	92	92
Relations ...	6	12	27
Townspeople ...	20	69	66
Natives of different towns ...	16	55	51

The figures are not of sufficient volume to justify us in making any general deduction from them ; but it may be noted in passing that the only division which has failed to save one-half of its children is the small one “ Relations,” where more than two-thirds of the offspring have died. The division is so small, however, that no inference of any value can be drawn from the figures.

In the whole of the 448 families enumerated by the Commission we have noted only three families of six children each, and one family of five children, in which there has been no death. The number of families in which there were six surviving children was four. Ten families had each five surviving children.

On the other hand, we have observed one family of six, all dead ; five families of six, in each of which five of the children had died ; and two families of seven, in each of which there had been six deaths.

208. Of these sixty-nine large families, there were four families in each of which six children had died, and fourteen in each of which five had died.

209. Of the 448 families enumerated, there were only sixty-two—equal to 13·8 per cent.—in which no death of a child had occurred. Of that number thirty-three were families in which only one child had been born ; thus leaving only twenty-nine families of more than one child which had not been reduced in numbers by death.

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210. Among the heads of the 448 families enumerated, there have been a number of individuals who have begotten or borne very large families.

The foregoing figures have reference only to children of existing marriages. The following table sets forth the families that fourteen couples have had of the existing marriage, and by other partners :—

	Family of the Marriage.			Husband's Children by Other Women.			Wife's Children by Other Men.			Total.		
	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
1 Family	1	6	7	3	10	13	0	1	1	4	17	21
"	0	3	3	4	12	16	...	...	...	4	15	19
"	4	2	6	1	11	12	...	...	...	5	13	18
"	4	4	8	0	6	6	1	1	2	5	11	16
"	1	0	1	0	9	9	2	4	6	3	13	16
" .....	...	...	...	1	5	6	4	5	9	5	10	15
" .....	...	...	...	3	4	7	1	5	6	4	9	13
"	1	1	2	0	6	6	1	4	5	2	11	13
"	2	0	2	2	5	7	3	0	3	7	5	12
"	4	1	5	2	4	6	...	...	...	6	5	11
"	3	5	8	1	2	3	...	...	...	4	7	11
"	5	1	6	0	4	4	0	1	1	5	6	11
"	1	0	1	1	5	6	1	3	4	3	8	11
" .....	...	...	...	2	2	4	1	6	7	3	8	11
Total	26	23	49	20	85	105	14	30	44	60	138	198

The individuals forming the fourteen couples have each begotten or borne on an average seven children; that is to say, each pair has produced fourteen infants. Some of the men, it will be seen, figure conspicuously in this table—one having begotten twenty, one nineteen, and one eighteen children. Two of these men are chiefs of districts. Ten appears to be the greatest number of children that any of the women has borne. Another has borne nine, two others eight, and four others seven each.

211. But death has been busy in these large families.

By the existing marriages the fourteen couples do not replace themselves, having only twenty-six children alive and twenty-three dead. This, perhaps, is not so much to be wondered at as three of them have had no family of the existing marriages—made probably late in life and after the women were past child-bearing. The husbands have had 105 children by other women. Of these children only twenty survive and eighty-five are dead; that is to say, rather more than four of every five have died. The women have, by other men, had forty-four children, of whom fourteen are alive and thirty dead; that is to say, rather more than two-thirds have died.

Of the whole number of 198 children, of which these fourteen couples are the parents, 60 live and 138 have died; that is to say, only 30·3 per cent. of those born have survived.

212. The familiarity with death which is an accompaniment of savage life, and which is perhaps never absent from even civilised existence in the tropics, has undoubtedly a depressing effect on the native Fijian. Unlike many African and Melanesian tribes who appear to have no idea of death, save as the result of witchcraft or other occult form of violence, the Fijian of to-day lives in an atmosphere of mortality, and regards it as the normal condition of things. He is not tenacious of life, and his dread of death is a mere physical fear. If he become ill of any save the most ordinary malady, he probably makes no struggle for life. If he appear to be very sick his friends will dutifully dress him in his best clothes and oil his body for the burial. Instances are known where a Fijian, ill of some chronic malady, has fixed the date of his death two or three weeks before its occurrence, and died on the appointed day. Similarly, as is pointed out by one of the writers, a mother with a sick child expects its death, and her expectation is invariably realised.

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The fact that the sick infant as well as the sick adult dies making no struggle for life, indicates that the cause that relaxes the native's tenacity of life is not merely a mental one, for nearly one-half of the deaths take place at an age when the mental faculties have not come into play. The cause in these cases must thus be looked for either in inherited physical weakness or unsuitability of surroundings.

213. In his incapacity to resist the attacks of disease mainly lies the want of virility of the Fijian. The result of this is a heavy death-rate, which by its preponderance over the birth-rate reduces the population. During the past eleven years the death-rate has been as follows :—

1881	...	...	...	37·68
1882	...	...	...	36·20
1883	...	...	...	38·17
1884	...	...	...	59·03
1885	...	...	...	44·15
1886	...	...	...	44·45
1887	...	...	...	36·07
1888	...	...	...	35·15
1889	...	...	...	40·44
1890	...	...	...	38·92
1891	...	...	...	49·72

Whether the virility of the native race has waned during the period in which the Fijians have been under the observation of Europeans is a matter that cannot be ascertained. But there is little doubt that the women now bear children at shorter intervals than was the case in former times, and that the means of rearing children have not improved either as regards adequacy of diet, the work of women, or the sanitary condition of houses.

214. It is unnecessary, however, to turn to the form of government in order to find a cause for the supposed loss of vitality. There is a number of circumstances now acting simultaneously on the race, which in themselves are sufficient to produce as great a degree of degeneracy as is anywhere apparent.

215. The Fijians are subject to certain ailments that tend to diminish virility. Kidney diseases which are thought to do so are rare. Injuries to the head sometimes produce impotence in the male, but such causes are mere accidents. Diseases of the testes are somewhat common, and result chiefly from neglected orchitis or from tubercle. But hydrocele is so common that hundreds of cases are treated by the medical men of the Colony every year, and probably a still larger number never come under their observation. The native treatment for hydrocele, when any is resorted to, is tapping by means of a *sui-ni-beka*—the hollow wing-bone of the pteropus (flying-fox)—a form of surgery both barbarous and risky, though effectual for the time being. It is doubtful whether hydrocele immediately affects virility, but it may often be the cause of marriage being deferred through shame. *Elephantiasis scroti* prevents sexual intercourse for a number of years, but the testes are not usually damaged by it, and instances are not wanting in which men have become parents after the removal of elephantiacal tumours of the scrotum. About a dozen such operations are performed on Fijian patients at the Colonial Hospital annually, and probably there are as many more cases which do not come under observation or treatment. The disease is thus a common one in Fiji. But these are causes only incidentally affecting the virility of the race.

216. First in order among the chief causes of the loss of vitality we place the effects of the ravages of the three great epidemics alluded to above—an obscure, but, in our opinion, a real cause of diminished stamina.

In the second place we put the taint of constitutional diseases, by which Fijians are extensively affected, namely, scrofula, yaws, leprosy, filariasis, and tuberculosis, with their concomitant evils, which offer great obstacles to the physical wellbeing of the people, not only in the passing generation, but in its posterity.

Next

WANT OF
VIRILITY.

Minute by the
Commission.

WANT OF
VIRILITY.

Next in order we would place the insufficiency of diet.

Minute by the
Commission.

The ordinary diet of the Fijians is deficient in proteids, and consists mainly of starchy foods, which, though they support life, are not essential to it, and do not impart what may be termed fibre or staying power. While this diet favours the speedy healing of clean wounds, it seems to withhold from its consumers that essential vitality which the flesh-eaters of temperate regions acquire.

Lastly, may perhaps be mentioned, the effects of close consanguineous marriage referred to in a former part of this Report (*vide* paragraph 54).

MENTAL
APATHY, &c.

IX.—MENTAL APATHY, LAZINESS, IMPROVIDENCE, AND LACK OF AMBITION.

Digest of Replies.

Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

217. Ten writers cite the mental apathy of the Fijians as a cause of the decrease of the population. They are, it is declared by more than one writer of long and intimate experience, indifferent to their own welfare, improvident and culpably negligent of the health of their children. This improvidence and indifference, it is said, is a growth of the two decades in which they have been free from war. It is said to manifest itself in the lethargy of the chiefs who take no interest in measures initiated by the Government for the welfare of their people; in a tendency to purchase the few European commodities they require by bartering food instead of doing work; in the waste of food at a single feast; in a disposition to leave everything to the native officials instead of acting for themselves; and in a kind of fashionable callousness, or "care-nothing spirit of the age," which is used as a justification for every neglect of duty and for every wrong-doing.

218. This indifference is due, we are told, to the effects of peace and comparative prosperity. Savage warfare was waged with weapons too primitive to be destructive to human life, while it made each individual wary, energetic, and ambitious for the predominance of his own clan. The fear of incursions by an enemy fostered individual responsibility. Besides the calls upon his energy made by personal danger, the primitive form of his implements demanded for house-building and agriculture a high degree of industry. But with peace came European implements, and as the production of food entailed less labour, and alertness was no longer a condition of existence, the Fijian became more indolent and improvident. This degeneracy was hastened by the decay of the tribal feeling formerly nurtured by warfare, which covered the indolent and lazy man with well-merited obloquy, and subjected him to various disabilities.

One writer believes that the isolation of the various tribes and their disinclination to intermarry produces laziness, depression, and indifference.

Another regards the improvidence and indolence of the natives as inherent characteristics, independent of any change in their circumstances. They are, he urges, naturally incapable of providing for the future. They are lazy because they have no ambition; and any natural desire they may have to raise themselves above their fellows is checked by the reflection that any property they may accumulate will be begged from them by *kerekere*.

219. To turn to the direct bearing which this indifference has upon infant mortality, one correspondent urges that the motive for rearing children in former times was the desire of the parents for protection in their old age; but that now, when they are protected by a settled government from the incursions of an enemy, the rearing of a child promises them no compensating advantage for the care and trouble it exacts.

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220. We endorse in the main the remarks of the writers on this subject. The Fijian, never having known the struggle for existence that prevails in the more crowded communities of the old world, was, in earlier times, spurred into activity by the fear of annihilation, for upon his alertness his existence depended. But with the bestowal of the *Pax Britannica* this impulse failed, and,

and, as the earth still yielded all he required to satisfy his simple wants, he was able to indulge his natural indolence.

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This mental apathy is shown in his neglect of precautions against disease if they entail the slightest effort, in his indifference to the ultimate fate of his race provided that his own comfort is not affected, and in his languid surprise that Europeans should interest themselves in bettering his condition. He is not, it is true, so devoid of the sense of providing for the future as to neglect to sow his crops, or even, in rare instances, to plant cocoanuts for the use of his children; but his providence does not extend so far as to make him spend money and labour upon works, such as the storage of water, that will save his labour or benefit his health in the future. The idea of making any sacrifice for the sake of posterity is beyond his mental compass.

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221. These traits seem to us to be the natural outcome of the primitive organisation of village communities, among whom the tie of individual property is so loose and ill-defined that the more industrious have ever before them the certainty that any property they acquire will be begged from them by thriftless relatives, for among such a people thrift is regarded as a vice, and wasteful prodigality as one of the highest virtues. Industry and thrift, however, are hardly to be looked for as the product of a luxurious climate with a moderate population, but are to be found mainly among those races whose climate and soil produce food only at certain seasons of the year (and then only in return for labour expended in husbandry), or in communities whose population is so numerous as to render the local supply of food insufficient for all.

222. The Fijians may not now be more lazy by nature than they were in heathen times, but they plant less food, because the chief, relieved of the necessity for studying the welfare of his people with a view to the efficiency of the tribe in time of war, and not wishing, perhaps, to harrass them with unwelcome orders, allows them to please themselves as to the amount of food they plant. Even in heathen times they worked spasmodically, and were incapable of sustained effort.

They lack the alertness that characterises races who have to contend against the *feræ naturæ* of which the islands are void, and they have none of the steady application of those people who must compete with others to win their daily bread.

223. It is not surprising that they have no ambition. The only real distinction recognised among them is that of birth, and, in a minor degree, prowess in war. In these days, when there is no scope for the latter, promotion in the Wesleyan Church or the Civil Service has begun to take its place. The change, however, has been too recent to permit more than a very few of the people to aim at the distinction prized by members of a civilised and democratic society; and they have hardly yet come to appreciate the fact that latent ambition must be backed up by other qualifications before it can raise a man from the estate in which he was born. But the scope for ambition will extend as the people become fitted to undertake greater responsibilities.

224. While we blame the Fijians for their thriftlessness and apathy—traits that undoubtedly constitute one of the most hopeless and disheartening features in the work of trying to save them from themselves—we are prone to judge them by standards higher than a broadminded and dispassionate consideration of their case will support. We are also apt to forget that they are land-owning peasants, a class which even among ourselves is exempt from the grinding necessity of perpetual toil which has come to be regarded as the natural lot of the poor.

225. It may, therefore, be said that the Mental Apathy, Laziness, and Improvidence of the people arise from their climate, their diet, and their communal institutions. The climate does not stimulate to exertion, the ordinary food of the people imparts no staying-power, and the conditions of production do not demand that the individual must labour in order to exist, while the communal institutions paralyse the exercise of individual effort and destroy the instinct of accumulation. These conditions are further accentuated by the loss of such incentives to exertion as existed in savage times. We are not sanguine that the disposition of the natives will

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will undergo improvement until they begin to attach importance to a more varied and more nutritive diet, when the impulse of increased wants which can only be satisfied by the acquisition of money will lead to the growth of individual effort, and thus dispel the *vis inertiae* which the Fijian of to-day so successfully presents to the introduction of progressive measures. This must follow the course of natural and healthy evolution, and its achievement cannot be hoped for in the present generation.

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DRINKING-
WATER.

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X.—QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF FOOD AND DRINKING-WATER.

Digest of Replies.

226. The views of the twenty-four writers who refer to this subject may be classed in nine different categories, as follows :—

Food.

Quality only,—

Unsuitable, imperfect, inferior	...	...	...	4
Wrong system of pig-keeping	...	...	...	2

Supply only,—

Abundant	...	...	...	...	...	1
Irregular and uncertain	...	...	...	...	...	5
Scarce	...	...	...	...	...	5

Quality and Supply,—

Lack of, for infants	13
Lack of, for mothers	6
Lack of, for invalids	2

Water.

Quality, bad	6
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227. A parallel is drawn by one writer between the Fijians and the peasantry of the Scottish border. Both, he says, were able sixty years ago to do an amount of work that would crush their degenerate descendants of to-day. The cause in both cases he declares to be a change of diet. The northern peasantry have abandoned their diet of oatmeal and milk for one of meat, bread, tea, and whisky; the Fijian has reduced the quantity of his food-supply, and compels himself to exist for a portion of each year on improper food.

Four writers support him in saying that the Fijians do not plant so much food as they did in heathen times, when, as one of them remarks,—

“Every town was a pig-pen, every district a huge taro and yam bed—on every flat and reef was a fish fence—and every few days a feast had to be made for the chiefs and people.”

Another writer, however, of more than thirty years' experience of the natives says,—

“It is hardly to be doubted that in these days there is generally sufficient food for the people throughout the year * * * There is nothing to be compared with the annual season of *dausiga*, or scarcity, which used to last for three or four months every year, when the people had to subsist upon roots and fruits hardly fit for pigs, and only obtained and made eatable after excessive labour by the whole community—men, women, and children.”

It is said that before the race can be expected to recover its old vitality, the Fijians must be twice as well fed as they are now. Bread, it is pointed out, is not the Fijian's staff of life, but it is thought that it should be made so.

228. An official opinion is quoted that the chiefs do not enforce the planting regulation which prescribes a minimum size of crop for each individual; and this view is supported by the statement of more than one writer. But a correspondent writing of the island of Ciccia, declares that while the prescribed area is planted, it is never afterwards visited by the owners, and the crop is consequently choked and destroyed by weeds.

229. Another writer points to the superior physical condition of the chiefs as a proof of the results of better food and housing, and believes that if all the natives received the same nourishment as do the chiefs, the stamina of the race would be materially raised. [While there is undoubtedly some truth in this contention, it is

not

not to be forgotten that the chiefs owe much of their physical superiority to a long course of selection of the finest women as chiefs' wives.]

230. One of the writers who point to the defective quality of the food believes that the labour spent on fishing by the women—an occupation often harmful in itself—would, if expended on the raising of live stock, provide the people with a more regular and abundant supply of nitrogenous food than they now obtain.

231. Allusion is made to the restrictions upon the use of cocoanuts during the seasons when these are *tabu* for making taxes. Native labourers, it is said, when allowed to use as many cocoanuts as they please, take them at every meal.

Against this the native opinion that if the cocoanuts were not *tabu* for a portion of every year the improvident would live on them, and abandon planting, is quoted, with the remark that this evil could be corrected by a more strict enforcement of the planting regulation.

232. "The gorging of unripe fruit" is also cited as an instance of improper diet, and this is thought to produce bowel diseases, especially in the case of young women. Upon nursing-mothers the effect of an improper diet of roots is at once seen in the rapid loss of condition.

233. To turn to the more specific defects in diet alleged by the correspondents, we find the principal one to be irregularity in eating. The natives have, says one writer, no regular time for meals, and they seldom have any warm breakfast before going out to work. They have no regular animal food. With the best conditions for rearing pigs and poultry the people prefer to live upon roots, eating meat not oftener than once a week—and preserved meat in tins in preference to fresh meat. The pigs and poultry are reserved for ceremonial feasts or the entertainment of strangers.

234. Irregularity of diet is alleged by one writer to proceed from the constantly recurring *solevu* or festivals which reduce the entertainers to want, and produce unwholesome satiety among the visitors.

235. Among the suggestions made for correcting these defects in nutrition are the following :—

- (1) That the chiefs should be compelled to see that the planting regulation is carried out, and that every official should be made responsible for an abundant food-supply.
- (2) That the natives should be induced to store food instead of living from day to day; that they should be taught to salt down pigs instead of consuming them at a single meal, or else to periodically kill pigs and divide the fresh pork among families; and that they should be persuaded to keep more live stock, and to renew the old system of *moka* (stone) fish-fences as well as to attend to the ordinary shifting ones.
- (3) That they should be encouraged to eat more salt than they do.
- (4) That the *tabu* on cocoanuts should not be maintained for so long a period in each year, and that they should be more used in cooking than is the case at present.
- (5) That the custom of lazy persons helping themselves from the plantations of their relations should be stopped.
- (6) That natives should not be allowed to wander about in boats, taking away a large quantity of food.
- (7) That they should be induced to use maize as an article of diet, thus supplying the deficiency in nitrogenous and fatty constituents.
- (8) That the Government should use every influence to induce the natives to use cereals instead of roots for food, supplying them with handmills, and instructing them in making bread.
- (9) That *solevu* should be forbidden and large *magiti* discouraged.
- (10) That the sale of food for the purpose of raising funds to buy communal boats and vessels should be discouraged.

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236. Water.—There is a weight of testimony to the effect that the drinking-water of the Fijians is generally unwholesome. So long as the water is moderately clear they believe it to be good though it may be taken from the neighbourhood of a graveyard or from an impure well. The wells are in reality shallow pools for the collection of surface water and they are full of infusion. The earth from which the water drains into these pools is soaked with every kind of impurity. While these conditions are specially bad on the alluvial flats of river deltas, they also exist in places where good water is obtainable. On the higher reaches of the rivers where the water is wholesome the natives have a prejudice against drinking it, believing it to produce ringworm and other complaints. In the mountain villages situated on raised streams the water is good, but even there it is often rendered unwholesome by being kept in dirty vessels of bamboo or pottery. On the northern and north-western slopes of Vitilevu the streams are heavily charged with argillaceous matter which is probably unwholesome; and in the islands of the Lau Group the drinking-water has generally flowed through taro swamps before it reaches the village. It is pointed out that as the natives are great water-drinkers at work and after meals, the quality of the water-supply is of the highest importance.

As a remedy, it is suggested that the natives should be taught well-sinking on proper principles, or that they should be encouraged to boil water before using it. If there were no restriction on the use of cocoanuts it is thought that they would use the young fruit for drinking purposes in place of the unwholesome water they now drink.

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237. Food.—All our native witnesses agreed in saying that famine is unknown in Fiji, and that even in times of scarcity every native can procure enough food to satisfy his hunger. This means more than would appear on the surface, for, owing doubtless to the low nutritive value of his staple foods, a native invariably eats to repletion. Our inquiries tend to show that the food of the adult male Fijian is ample in amount and in variety, but that it lacks the important nutritive qualities possessed by foods rich in nitrogenous constituents, while there can be no doubt that it is quite inadequate for women during the periods of gestation and suckling, and for young children.

238. The staple foods of the Fijian are yams, *dalo* (*arum esculentum*), plantains, and breadfruit. Next to these in point of order are *kumala* (*ipomæa batatas*), *kawai* (*dioscorea aculeata*), *kaile* (*dioscorea bulbifera*), *tivoli* (*dioscorea nummularia*), arrowroot, kassava, *via* (*alocasia indica* and *cyrtosperma edulis*), China bananas, cocoanuts, ivi-nuts (*inocarpus edulis*), and a number of other vegetables and fruits. Animal food is not reckoned as real food (*kakana dina*), but is eaten as a luxury or zest. All these vegetables contain a large proportion of starch and water, and are deficient in proteids. The supply of the principle staples is moreover irregular, and is greatly affected by variable seasons or by attacks of insects or vermin. A great quantity of native food is required to feed a few people. Most of the staples must be eaten within a short time of being dug, and almost all of them must be used on attaining maturity. The time spent on growing native food is altogether out of proportion to its value. The most valuable of the native food staples is *dalo*, which can only be grown with success in the wet districts of the Colony, or in places where there is running-water.

239. It has been said that the natives are less assiduous in planting *dalo* than they were formerly.* They themselves are slow to admit this charge, and but few white men have become competent by long residence, travelling, and observation, to give a reliable opinion on it. The cultivation of *dalo* is nevertheless an industry well worthy of encouragement, and we would suggest the propriety of devising some more suitable means than the *madrai* pits for preserving the produce, which otherwise only remains fit to be eaten within a few days of being digged.

We

* Parliamentary Paper [C. 5,039]; relating to the Native Population of Fiji, *vide* No. 7 (Enclosure to).

We understand that this difficulty has been overcome in Hawaii, and we see no insuperable obstacle to introducing the process in our own Colony, more especially in the dry districts, where the root could readily be desiccated and ground into flour.

240. In places in which *dalo* or breadfruit is not plentiful the natives have become accustomed to a season of scarcity from the month of November when the yam-crop has been consumed, till February when the new crop is ripe, and in some districts this scarcity has been increased by the ravages of the banana disease, which destroys the plantains. If bananas are unobtainable during these periods of scarcity the natives subsist upon *ivi-nuts* and unwholesome and indigestible fruits or roots, such as *yaka* (*pachyrrhizus angulatus*), or *kaile gaga*, or upon such wild yams as are obtainable. But even at such times an able-bodied man or woman seems always to be able to procure a sufficient quantity of food.

241. Besides the banana disease, and the damage done to the breadfruit trees in some islands by horses, there is another reason for a diminished regularity in the supply of the staple foods. In heathen times feasts were confined to occasions of ceremony within the tribe, such as births, marriages, and funerals, or the rare visits of allies or friendly tribes. In these days, however, every meeting connected with the Government or the Missions is accompanied by a feast to the visitors. As there is, besides the half-yearly Provincial Councils, a District Council every month, and some three or four missionary meetings every quarter, the expenditure of food is considerable. These meetings are held in different villages of the district or circuit in turn, and the feasts, though often small, being in addition to those ordinarily made for births, marriages, and funerals, increase the tax on the food-supply of the people.

242. The animal food most often eaten by the Fijian is fish. Except at certain times the supply of fish in the coastal villages is fairly regular, more especially in those parts where fish-fences can be erected. In Macuata and one or two other districts the natives smoke or dry fish, but not to any great extent. In Rewa and some other provinces, after a good haul, fish is sometimes preserved in leaves for a few days by repeated cooking, and in this state it is often eaten when tainted. At Bau and other places, as in Samoa, Tonga, and the Gilbert Islands, mullet and some other kinds of fish are eaten raw as a delicacy.

Pigs and fowls are to be met with in every native village, but they are reserved for feasts or for the entertainment of strangers, and are seldom eaten by the owners as an article of diet. Except on such occasions fowls are rarely killed even for the use of a sick person. We had thought that this abstinence from poultry might proceed from some complicated system of proprietorship, but we were assured by all the native witnesses that pigs and fowls are generally owned by individuals absolutely. Whatever may be the reason, the Fijian seldom eats a fowl and never an egg, though every living thing found on the reefs or in the bush is in some places eaten, such as shell-fish, snakes, iguanas, lizards, grasshoppers, rats, grubs, chameleon eggs, cats, dogs, and occasionally a wild duck or a moor-hen, and, in recent times, a mongoose. Pork, which is consumed only at feasts, is generally eaten to excess.

243. Milk, the principal article of sustenance for children in the early stages of life, is not to be had in native villages, and many Fijians vomit on first tasting it. There are neither goats nor cattle except in a few isolated instances where they are kept by chiefs as pets. The natives have no feeling for the lower animals, and are utterly regardless of their comfort and preservation. Their agricultural system, which is determined in great measure by the quality and conformation of their lands, is unfavourable to pastoral occupations.

244. Besides native food, preserved meat, biscuits, bread, and tea plentifully sweetened with sugar, are used by most of the richer natives, but as luxuries, not as *kakana dina* (real food). To this change in their diet the natives attribute the decay of their teeth, a condition which they declare was unknown to the last generation.

245. The Fijians have at the most two meals of cooked food in the day. The principal meal is eaten in the afternoon when they return from their plantations. Sometimes

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Sometimes food is cooked before they start in the morning, but more often they take with them some cold yam or *dalo* left from the previous day, or trust to roasting some wild food in the intervals of work in the plantation or the bush. The women, however, generally cook a meal for themselves and the children during the morning if there is sufficient food and firewood in the house. The boys either eat with their parents or forage for fruit in the bush, eating large quantities of it unripe, and thus probably inducing the bowel complaints that are so common among them. It is the custom in some places to cook a separate pot of food for the children which they can eat during the day. This practice should be encouraged.

246. It is alleged by planters of experience, that in Fiji where the immigrant Melanesian labourer is fed on yams, *kumala*, and on native food generally, he is of much less value as a labourer than in Queensland where he is given a liberal ration of bread and beef.

247. Water.—Mr. Wilkinson states at page 83 of the Replies to the Circular, that the natives believe themselves to be particular about the quality of their drinking-water. At the Annual Meeting of the Chiefs at Kadavu, in 1885, they were reprimanded by the Administrator, in his opening Address, for their careless and unclean habit of drinking bad water.* In their reply (Resolution No. 14), they said, “You mention bad water and insufficiency of food as causes (for the excessive mortality) but we are usually careful about the water we drink and we think that there is more food now than in former times.” The Fijians are in reality ignorant of what constitutes purity in drinking-water. They assume any water to be drinkable which is moderately clear to the naked eye and does not contain solid impurities. We know of instances in which the water is collected from surfaces immediately below a graveyard. Villages are often so situated that it is impossible to obtain any wholesome water within a reasonable distance, extending in dry seasons to several miles. There are dozens of such villages in the mangrove-swamp deltas of the Rewa, Navua, Nadi, Ba, Dreketi and other rivers, and in numerous small sandy, rocky, and riverless islands. There are hundreds of others where the native method of using mere surface waterholes, instead of resorting to properly sunk and protected wells, affords a supply of dangerous water, although a fairly good one might be gained by better management.

In endeavouring to improve the habits of the Fijian in all such matters as these, the hygienist has not only the native's ignorance to instruct, but the much harder task of overcoming his obstinate and prejudiced adherence to the ways of his fathers.

Remedies.

248. We will now consider the possible remedies for the evils we have pointed out.

The remedies suggested may be classified as follows :—

- (1) Greater attention to food production and garnering.
- (2) Prevention of the waste of food.
- (3) Change of and improvement in the food-staple.
- (4) Attention to the sources of water-supply.

In another part of this Report, as relating more particularly to infants' food, we will deal with the question of inducing the natives to keep goats or cattle.

The obvious remedy is the rigid application of the existing law which provides that “every able-bodied man shall have a plantation of not less than one hundred bananas, five hundred hills of either yams, *dalo*, *kawais*, or *kumalas*, and shall keep it in good order. No one who owns a *dalo* bed shall allow it to remain idle; and every man who digs up a wild yam shall replant the top of it.” There are besides, penalties provided for those who give away their food without retaining sufficient for the use of their family. It is certain that this regulation is seldom enforced, because the native officers charged with its administration are generally unwilling to prosecute members of their community whose breaches of law do not injure others than themselves.

249.

* Blue Book (C. 5,039).

249. We think, however, that the majority of the natives do plant the minimum required by the regulation, but that the incessant feasts to which they contribute, and the greater number of strangers they are now called upon to provide for, exhaust the year's crop before the following harvest has come round.

One writer points out that natives who live near the town of a chief are generally less prosperous than those who live at a distance from him. This opinion probably arises from the fact that gatherings usually take place in chiefs' villages, and that the people of those and the adjoining villages are called upon to provide the food for the visitors.

The apparent remedy for this would be to reduce the number of feasts provided for Government and Mission gatherings; but we are of opinion that it would be better to countenance the modification rather than the abolition of those feasts, for, it must not be forgotten that large areas of food are planted in anticipation of them, and that in seasons of scarcity the natives fall back on those supplementary plantations.

250. We agree with the writers who advocate the encouragement of the natives in the use of cereals and animal food as articles of daily diet, but we think that the change must be very gradual, and that it cannot be assisted by legislation. Something might, however, be done towards that end by introducing and extending the cultivation of rice for native taxes, as rice is already used as native food on European plantations and in prison, and the natives have thus to some extent become acquainted with it. Rice is now grown by Indians in the Colony and prepared by a primitive process for their own use. But it is not by any means certain that the natives would thus be led to use it as food, for they make little or no use of maize which they have cultivated for many years.

Rice, however, although of inferior nutritive value is the staple-food of races that are increasing in numbers, while maize-meal is the principal food of some of the strongest races of men, and if the consumption of these cereals cannot otherwise be introduced, it should be done in the "Model Settlements" which we advocate in another part of this Report.

But we think that if it is explained to natives that they should vary their diet by using maize-meal or rice as one of their articles of food, some of them might be found willing to adopt it. It would entail the purchase of mills to grind the corn, but that would not be a matter of insurmountable difficulty.

As already mentioned, natives often go without any regular meal till the afternoon; and we think they might be induced to breakfast more regularly, and that maize-meal in the shape of porridge, or as loaves kneaded up with *kumala* and cooked in a *lovo*, or as puddings mixed with cooked pumpkin and cocoanut milk and boiled in a cloth (forms in which maize-meal is appreciated by Melanesian immigrants), might come into use in this connection.

Attention should also be given to the cultivation of beans or lentils; and the cultivation and use of the plantain (*vudi dina*) should be liberally extended.

We also think that the license fee of £2 per annum imposed on country bakers should be no longer exacted, as settlers should rather be encouraged to make bread for sale to natives.

251. The two radical innovations which seem to us to be the only changes calculated to do away with the water difficulty are—

(1) Laying on village water-supply in iron pipes in places where it is feasible.

(2) Well-sinking on proper principles to be systematically taught.

In such districts as the deltas above mentioned a supply of good water in iron pipes would not only be an incalculable boon to the inhabitants from a hygienic point of view, but would, we feel sure, be warmly welcomed by them. Natives thoroughly appreciate the luxury of the plentiful water-supply afforded by the Government mains in Suva; and, we believe they would in most instances be willing to pay for pipes in their own villages. If necessary, it would even be worth while to consider the propriety of pushing matters by withholding permits for the purchase of boats until a water-supply fund had been formed. Should this plan
not

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not find favour, the natives of any district or village should be encouraged or obliged to raise the necessary money by local levies in the ordinary way, or by annually devoting a portion of the tax refunds until a sufficient amount is provided for the purpose; but we do not anticipate that any difficulty would be met with in obtaining the necessary funds.

252. In many places, not plains or river deltas, villages are so situated as to benefit greatly by having pure water conveyed to their midst at a really trivial cost. This has been done spontaneously by the natives in some cases, as at Daviqele, in Kadavu, and some villages on the Ra coast. *Balabala* logs and bamboos are utilised for this purpose. The late Roko Tui Dreketi, father of the present chief, at the instance of the master of a whaling vessel, ordered his people to lay on water from the Nasinu River, near Kalabo, to Mataikalabo, a distance of at least 4 miles, and this was actually done in troughs made of split *balabala* logs. The necessity for co-operation, which the establishment of water systems of this kind would bring about in many places, would constitute, we think, a powerful lever for the application in practice of those principles of centralisation which we advocate in another portion of this Report.

253. We have obtained from the Commissioner of Works an estimate of the cost of laying on water to the group of villages at Rewa. The requisite fall cannot be found nearer than the *Wai ni buku* on the Kalabo range, a distance of 5 miles in a direct line. A pipe 2 inches in diameter to cover this distance would, if laid down by the natives themselves, cost about £1,100. With a fall of 150 feet it would discharge 12 gallons a minute, far more than is necessary for the supply of the entire population of the Rewa province. Provision should be made for the separate delivery of drinking-water, and then for a bathing-place and stone slabs with a pool for washing clothes,—the waste water draining into the river.

254. The want of the instinct of cleanliness in the natives makes it necessary that the delivery of drinking-water should be very carefully conserved, and that the separate accommodation for bathing and washing clothes should be provided in every case. Stringent regulations would be also required, and a special village constable should be appointed to have charge of the water-supply and its administration, subject, through the *Roko*, to the Commissioner for Native Affairs.

We have quoted the case of Rewa Delta as involving an extreme outlay, but in most parts of the Colony water could be laid on at considerably less expense.

255. To summarise our conclusions, we think—

- (1) That while it cannot be said that Fijians suffer from a lack of provisions, as far as quantity is concerned, their diet is inadequate in quality, especially as regards food for mothers and young children.
- (2) That the supply of the better kinds of food available is often irregular owing to the increased consumption and waste of food at feasts.
- (3) That the drinking-water is a grave source of disease.

256. As remedies for these evils we think—

- (1) That the planting regulation should be strictly enforced by giving, if necessary, a portion of the fine to the informer; or by appointing, as hereafter recommended, an European officer in each province, who would have the supervision of sanitary matters, and would prosecute in all cases of neglect of the Native Regulations.
- (2) That the *tabu* on cocoanuts should never be held to prevent the use of cocoanut for food in moderation or for use by mothers and young children, and that it should be removed as soon as each village has completed its assessment of taxes, instead of being kept in force, as frequently happens, until the district or, in some instances, the province has paid the full amount.
- (3) That to provide for the use of cocoanuts in the future, the Government should compel the natives to plant trees annually and to attend to the subsequent weeding of them.

- (4) That the waste of food at native meetings should be discouraged.
- (5) That every effort should be made by the Government, through the medium of the Councils and the newspaper *Na Mata*, to encourage the natives to keep live stock, especially fowls and goats, and to use their flesh and also pork as regular articles of diet. The same efforts might be directed to encouraging the use of cereals, such as rice and maize as indicated in para. 250, and also the increased cultivation of the plantain, and the use of beans or lentils. We also recommend that settlers should be allowed to trade as country bakers without being required to pay a license fee.
- (6) That generally, natives should be encouraged to live better, to pay more attention to the variety of their food, to see that nursing-mothers in particular are well fed, and that they are provided with abundance of albuminous food, either in the shape of cocoanut preparations, or meat, or soups, and to be careful that their children have a sufficiency and variety of diet, and also that they be fed more than once or twice a day, with as much approximation to regularity as the people are capable of.
- (7) That the natives should be induced to pay for the laying on of water in pipes wherever this is practicable, and that where this is not possible the Government should have proper wells sunk, charging the cost to the communities benefiting by them.

The subject of "Infants' Food" will be dealt with under a separate heading (Cap. XXXI).

XI.—CLOTHING.

Digest of Replies.

257. Eight writers attribute to the injudicious use of clothing the prevalence among the Fijians of diseases of the respiratory organs. They wear, we are told, a flannel shirt or coat during a hot day and sit almost naked in the chilly breeze in the evening. In former times the women fished in the grass *liku* (skirt) which did not cling to the body as does the cotton *sulu*. In their houses they stifle in clothes, in close mosquito-screens, and under blankets; and when the body is heated and perspiring they go out in the rain with no covering but a cotton loin-cloth. One writer states that in Lakeba boys and girls use their wet *sulus* as a covering at night. The same custom seems to prevail in Rotuma, but the prevalence of diseases of the chest in that island is attributed to the liking which the natives have for working in the rain. In this respect they differ from their neighbours in Fiji.

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258. While we accept these statements we are less willing to concur in their deductions, believing that the extent to which errors are committed has been considerably exaggerated, and that the consequences are comparatively unimportant.

We fail to see that in the matter of clothing the Fijian race lives under any particular disadvantage, or that any improvement would affect the decrease of the population.

XII.—INSANITARY DWELLINGS AND DOMESTIC HABITS.

Digest of Replies.

259. This is a subject to which prominence is very naturally given by writers upon the Decrease of the Native Population. The insanitary conditions of native dwellings are described by thirty-three writers as regards both the situation of the villages and the domestic habits of the people.

It is pointed out,—

- (1) That a large number of the villages which were in former times perched upon commanding and naturally drained sites on hilltops for purposes

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purposes of defence, have now been moved down to mangrove swamps or low-lying land in order to be nearer to the water and the plantations, or with a view to supporting a claim to land by occupation. The village of Namena is cited as an instance of a removal from a good to a bad site.

- (2) That in the event of the appearance of typhoid or malarial fever the insanitary condition of low-lying villages would be severely felt; and that already in many of them no children are reared.
- (3) That in most of the villages situated on flat land there is no surface-drainage, in consequence of which the houses are surrounded by pools of stagnant water.
- (4) That the Government has not compelled the removal to higher ground of the villages situated in swamps.
- (5) That although many villages have been moved under the permission of the Government the best sites available have not generally been chosen.
- (6) That while natives may be less liable than Europeans to suffer injury from living on swampy ground they do not enjoy immunity from such evils.

On the other hand one writer, while admitting the insanitary condition of many villages, points out, with truth, that the inhabitants of villages placed on healthy sites, with good running-water and natural drainage, have decreased at the same rate as those built on swampy ground, and cites the villages of Nukubalavu, Maicekoro and Naidi in Nasavusavu as examples. One correspondent writing of the Lau Province declares that although the sites of many villages are undoubtedly insanitary, the decrease is not to be attributed to this cause.

260. To turn from the more general to the particular evils that are said to proceed from lack of sanitation, we are told,—

- (1) That most of the old villages are virtually graveyards.
- (2) That the old town moats which were formerly kept free from weeds provided in some degree for the surface-drainage of the village, but that they are now choked with weeds and undergrowth and collect all the filth of the town.
- (3) That the paths and ditches are only weeded and cleansed when the visit of the Magistrate or some other officer of Government is expected.
- (4) That the filthy state of the villages pollutes the drinking-water.

It is also pointed out that the keeping of pigs in native villages contributes to the insanitary conditions. “The pigs,” it is declared by one writer, “are invariably diseased,” and thus cause disease when eaten as well as by their filthy habits when alive. They are the general scavengers, and in common with dogs, attract flies that spread infection, while their proximity to the sleeping-places of the people accounts for the prevalence of internal parasites among young children. It is pointed out that they are not used as an article of diet, but are only eaten at funeral feasts or upon occasions of ceremony, when immoderate consumption induces dysentery, and that their preservation is therefore undesirable. For these reasons goats, it is thought, would be preferable as domestic animals.

261. The unhealthy condition of the native houses is naturally dwelt on at considerable length.

It is stated,—

- (1) That the chiefs' houses only are raised upon earth foundations, and that the people generally are afraid to raise their houses much above the ground lest they provoke the interference of the chiefs.
- (2) That as a consequence in wet weather the foundations of the people's houses become soaked with water.
- (3) That even when the foundation of the house is raised above the ground the soil is merely scooped out of the surrounding earth, leaving pits about the walls in which stagnant surface-water and filth collect.

(4)

- (4) That the houses themselves are too low, and are ill-ventilated at night, owing to the habit of closing all the doors for the purpose of promoting warmth and keeping out mosquitoes.
- (5) That the houses are often leaky, and that, instead of repairing them, the inmates resort to every kind of device to keep the rain off the bedplace, so that the middle of the house is often a pool of water.

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Upon one point however there is a difference of opinion. While one writer declares that the houses are overcrowded, and that this evil has increased since Cession, another states that in this respect there has been a vast improvement under settled government, for that, whereas each family now generally possesses a house of its own, three, four, and even five married couples used to live in the same house in former times.

It is further stated that the bodies of still-born children are kept for several days in the house from the superstition that burial will retard the mother's recovery. This last statement we have been unable to verify.

The effect of these conditions is especially marked upon children. They are born, we are told, by great fires. Their first days of life are spent in close, hot, smoky houses, where they breathe air vitiated by adults, and sleep in close, thick mosquito-screens upon half-rotten mats, inhaling the effluvium of the rotting grass beneath.

It is pointed out by the Chief Medical Officer that although Fiji has been so far free from paludal fevers, the prevalence of dysentery and diarrhoea so fatal to children may be due to malarial poison resulting from their living and sleeping in such close proximity to the damp soil.

262. The general remedy suggested is the better observance of the sanitary regulations too often ignored by the native officers charged with their administration. One writer expresses the opinion that no improvement can be hoped for unless there is regular inspection by European officers, and he is supported by the official opinion, expressed in 1888, that sanitary reform can be better effected by regular inspection by the Governor than by the enactment of regulations. On the other hand we have the opinion of a resident of wide experience of the natives, both as a public officer and as a planter, that direct orders from an European officer only disturb and irritate, and that reform is better effected through the medium of the Village Council.

The most general suggestion is that the villages situated on unhealthy sites should be systematically removed to sites chosen by European officers, and that the opportunity should be seized for concentrating the villages into settlements sufficiently accessible to permit of regular medical inspection. The houses of these villages should, we are told, be placed at greater intervals; pigs should be rigidly excluded from the interior of the village by a fence; and proper latrines should be erected for the use of every *mataqali*.

There are various suggestions regarding the improvement of the character of the houses themselves. They should be built on high *yavu* or foundations, faced with pebbles as is the custom in Colo; the walls should be constructed of double reeds instead of grass so as to secure ventilation; the inmates should be compelled to sleep on *vata* or raised bedplaces; and wherever practicable the house itself should be built on piles.

Several writers see no hope of improvement in the present generation, but trust to the education of the children in sanitary principles as a means of improving the sanitation.

One of these thinks that the schools themselves are at fault, and advocates the Government inspection of all the native schools, and the granting of the power of corporal punishment to all the native teachers. Others think that the schools should be made the means of systematic instruction in sanitary principles and the laws of health. "The people should," says another, "be given technical instruction in well-sinking and the conservation of water." It is also suggested that the surest way of bringing such teaching home to the people would be by the institution of a sanitary mission conducted by European women, a scheme which will be discussed in another part of this Report.

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263. The science of sanitation is scarcely a century old. Less than two centuries ago the mortality in England, especially in the towns, was enormous. In the year 1801 the population of Great Britain had reached only ten and a-half millions, and the subsequent rapid increase dates from the time when the authorities awoke to the necessity of meeting the attacks of disease by improved cleanliness and attention to sanitation. While the theory of germinal infection was still imperfectly understood, experience had shown that many lives could be saved by improved drainage, avoidance of damp, and attention to the sources of water supply. These facts give hope that improvement in the sanitation of the villages and dwellings of the Fijians will enable them to combat the epidemics and constitutional diseases that are proving so destructive to them.

264. The natives have no idea of the necessity of drainage for sanitary purposes, and cannot appreciate European teaching on the subject. They do not believe that damp or insanitary surroundings are factors in causing disease. When, for instance, in the course of our examination of native witnesses, we consulted Ratu Marika on this subject, he cited, in support of native opinion, the fact that war parties in the old times were in the habit of spending nights in the open air in all weathers, without being hurt by the exposure; and he even asserted that the populations of villages surrounded by miles of mangrove-swamp are generally subject to a lower mortality than those living on drier and more elevated sites.

It will be difficult to eradicate these prejudices from the Fijian mind; but as village hygiene is one of the points that the most enlightened of the Native Practitioners trained at the Colonial Hospital have seized upon, there is hope that by their influence some change for the better may be gradually brought about; although they have much to contend with in the jealousy of the chiefs.

265. The climate of Fiji is damp, the rainfall being on an average about 110 inches per annum—in some parts less and in others more. The moistness of a climate is a factor that undoubtedly affects the calibre, stamina, and health of a people; and in this respect there is a marked difference between Fiji and the Ellice and Gilbert Groups. In the latter group the rainfall is almost nominal, and the population increases so fast that it becomes a question whether the islands will be able to maintain their inhabitants, whilst in Fiji, with its great rainfall and luxuriant vegetation, the natives decrease in numbers, the principal reason being that they cannot rear their children. In view of the difference in climate, it would naturally be supposed that the house of the Fijian would be found to be better adapted to withstand dampness than that of the Line Islander. But such is not the case, except inasmuch as Fijian houses are built with walls while those of the Line Islanders are built with open sides (although many of them are now built with walls in obedience to the behest of the resident missionaries). The other advantages lie with the Line Island houses, inasmuch as in the common houses the bedplaces lie on a flooring of stones or shingle, while the sleeping-houses are lofts. In a Fijian house, on the other hand, the bedplace consists of grass thrown on the earthen floor and covered with mats.

It is the universal custom throughout Fiji not to remove this flooring-grass when rotten, but merely to cover it from time to time with a layer of fresh grass, and even this is not resorted to until the decomposition of the grass actually rots the mats that are laid upon it. When it is remembered that it is the habit of the natives to raise the mats in order to expectorate on the grass beneath, that the refuse from the daily meal is swept under the mats or to the side of the house, and that in wet weather the naked soil on which the grass is laid is actually wet from the soakings from outside, it can scarcely be doubted that the germs of many of the diseases that are so fatal to young children are communicated by the insanitary dwellings in which they pass their lives.

266. On the island of Vanuabalavu, in the province of Lau, steps were some time ago taken by Mr. Stipendiary Magistrate Swayne to induce the people to use bedplaces raised off the floor, and in March last he reported as follows:—

“During the last two months I succeeded in having raised (*vatas*) bedplaces made in all the houses in this district. Natives will not periodically sun their bedding unless made to do so.

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"The ordinary bedding is grass or *sasa* covered with mats, and unless repairs to the house necessitate its removal it remains for years.

"A greater part of the *sasa*, &c., turned out of doors last month was simply manure.

"I hope this change, which it has taken some time to bring about, will improve the health of the district.

"All the slabs obtained from sawing wood for bridges were preserved and distributed for this purpose."

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At a late Provincial Meeting it was reported by the *Buli* that a number of the people—although they had built the raised bedplaces as required—still slept on the floor of their houses refusing to adopt the new custom. Such conservatives, however, are to be found in every community; but their opposition is, in the nature of things, a diminishing quantity.

267. The ordinary Fijian house although capacious, picturesque, and apparently clean, is in the great majority of cases essentially insanitary. It always holds moisture and mould in its roof, its walls, and its floor (except in the few very dry districts or seasons), unless a fire be kept constantly alight in it;—and the practice of maintaining fires is said by the writer of Paper No. 15 to be dying out.

In many parts of the Colony the earth flooring (*yavu*) consists merely of an oblong plot of ground broken up on the surface and smoothed and moulded to the outline of the house about to be built. Such *yavu* are often not raised above the surface of the surrounding soil, they are seldom drained naturally, and are never provided with effective waterways. In places where the ground is soft, as in alluvial or clay soils, and the people have made comparatively high *yavus*, it will generally be found that the earth has been merely scooped up into the required shape, leaving, round the house, shallow pits in which stagnant water, befouled with animal and vegetable impurities, is allowed to accumulate. In wet weather the water soaks through the soil that forms the floor, and rots the grass under the mats upon which the inmates sleep.

The necessity for building their houses on high *yavu* has for years been impressed on the people. Native Regulation No. 5 of 1885 provides that the height of the foundation shall be regulated by the custom of the land, but that it shall in no case be less than 1 foot exclusive of any ditch round the house; and also that no ditch shall be dug round a house unless it is provided with a free outlet to prevent water from lying stagnant in the ditch. This regulation, however, is by no means universally observed, especially as regards the outlet to the ditch.

The principal cause of the natives' unwillingness to build high *yavu* is undoubtedly the law of custom. Throughout the coastal districts a high *yavu* is regarded as the prerogative of the chief, and a commoner who aspired to have his house built upon a higher foundation than those of his equals could not get the other villagers to help him in so erecting it. This feeling has hitherto proved strong enough to resist the efforts of the Government to effect a reform in this respect.

In Colo where the chiefs are, with a few well-known exceptions, less autocratic than those of the coastal districts, all the *yavu* are high, and generally faced with hard pebbles taken from the river-bed. A relative proportion between the *yavu* of the different ranks is sometimes preserved, but the lowest is rarely at the ground level, while the highest is as much as 15 feet above it.

Here and there throughout the Colony there are houses built upon piles similar to those of the natives of British New Guinea. These seem generally to be used for storing the yam-crop, and not as dwelling-houses. Such structures would be specially suited for use as dwelling-houses in the alluvial districts, and would be eminently healthy, but we fear that the extra trouble entailed in their construction, and their probable insecurity during hurricanes, would deter most natives from building them.

268. Next to the damp the worst features in native houses are the lack of ventilation and the prevalence of draughts. In the mountain houses there is seldom more than one doorway, and this is still made very low, as in former times when it was important to the security of the inmates that visitors, who might be enemies, should stoop as they entered. It has, even now, its advantages in wet weather and at night, but these in no way compensate for the evils of want of ventilation.

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In many houses, on the other hand, there are no less than four doorways, and unless more care is taken than is usually exercised by natives, draughts and chills must result.

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269. If the house be the unit of insanitary dwellings, the native village can only be regarded as a fortuitous concourse of such units. There is no design in the configuration of the villages: no laying out: each head of a family has his house, but its site is determined either by caprice or by complex considerations rising out of the ownership of the plots of soil on which the houses are built.

In the matter of village sites there has been a general and important change since the days of fighting have passed away. Towns which were formerly perched on strategical positions not easily accessible to an enemy are no longer, but are spread out anew on alluvial flats for facility in planting and in communication. This is no doubt a convenience for provincial administration, but it is a backward step from a sanitary point of view. The same causes have resulted in the old fighting-trenches being neglected and becoming overgrown with rank vegetation, as stated by the writers of Replies Nos. 15 and 61. The sites of villages are often changed on paltry excuses, the real reason being generally connected with the food plantations, or the threatened encroachment of some neighbour on land belonging to the village, or the desire of the villagers to get away from a public road and escape their share of the work of keeping it in repair and entertaining travellers, or a desire, on the other hand, to live near a public road. Of late, however, it has been the salutary practice of the Government to cause any projected new sites for villages to be inspected by a District Medical Officer, or, when that is not possible, by a native practitioner, before allowing the proposed removal to be carried into effect.

There are districts such as Rewa, Vutia, Noco, and others, in which it is impossible to find the ordinary conditions of a healthy site. They are situated in the deltas of rivers, and consist almost entirely of mangrove-swamp. The water of the streams in such places is brackish during most of the year, salt in the driest months, and, in the wet season, laden with muddy and slimy impurities. The surface-soil consists of the accumulated strata of alluvium deposited by floods, and is from one to three yards in depth. The subsoil is black silt filled with the decayed roots and stumps of the mangrove bushes and trees of a bygone century. A few feet below this is generally to be found the solid coral bed which once formed the foreshore or perhaps the sea-reef. In a soil of this formation drinkable water is not to be got by digging, yet the natives of such places resort to shallow surface wells for their supply.

270. The remedy to be applied to this condition of things should be of a two-fold nature so as to affect in the first instance the character of the dwelling-houses, and, in the second place, and as opportunity may offer, the sites and sanitation of villages.

271. With regard to the first point it should be borne in mind that one result of the abolition of the communal system in Tonga has been to make it impossible for people, who by reason of their lack of industry or their distance from a market have failed to accumulate chattels or coin, to get decent houses built for themselves and their families. This is a natural outcome of poverty when allied with an unaccustomed individual responsibility. To meet the risk of such consequences occurring in Fiji, as in the course of time the communal system here, too, is relinquished, we think it would be advisable to utilise some of the remaining strength of the system for the construction of a number of better and more permanent houses in every principal village, or in such villages as are found to be well situated, and also in the concentrated towns, if our recommendations under the head of "Decentralisation" are adopted.

The next question is, What description of house should the natives be induced to build? Timber and iron are extensively used by the natives of Eastern Polynesia as material for the construction of houses, but it does not appear that such houses are appreciated by Fijians, and the cost of their erection is a drawback. But it should not be impossible, in course of time, to introduce houses built of sawn timber

timber, and roofed with shingles. The natives have no knowledge of the building of stone and lime houses. If it were possible to introduce such buildings, they would be most suitable; but natives are too casual to be entrusted with the erection of such structures, and the element of expense would prevent the employment of skilled supervision.

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In limestone districts, and on the coast where coral is always available, there is nothing to prevent the erection of substantial "wattle-and-plaster" buildings such as are now in use as native chapels. The existence of these buildings prove the capabilities of the people in this direction. Unfortunately, however, natives have for the most part a rooted objection to houses of this description, alleging that they are cold and damp. But the dampness cannot be greater than in the ordinary native house, and in any case both cold and damp could be dispelled by keeping fires alight in the houses. Lastly, if none of these styles of house-building finds favour, the forest affords an ample supply of durable timber for the construction of squared log-houses, which could doubtless be raised by the native carpenters assisted by the pupils of the Native Technical School.

For all such buildings wooden shingles would afford a good roofing material and could be split by native *matais* from timber growing in the bush.

272. But, if for the present it be vain to hope for houses built of more solid material than is now used, we think the Government should aim at reforming the present style of native house. The most important reform is undoubtedly the erection of high *yavu*, and, to effect this, legislation is necessary. We think that a Regulation should be enacted providing that after a certain date no houses should be erected on a foundation lower than a given minimum, which we are inclined to think should be at least 4 feet. This elevation should be maintained throughout the whole area of the *yavu*, and the top of the *yavu* should be filled in with stones or pebbles where procurable. In no case should the earth be scooped from the surrounding surface, nor should depressions be left about the house. The exposed sides of the *yavu* should also be faced with stone where possible.

Flooring with timber (if the floor be at least 2 feet off the ground throughout its surface) should be accepted as the alternative of a *yavu* of the height above specified. Building on piles, with a yard of clear space underneath the floor, should also be allowed as an alternative to the *yavu*.

Such buildings should be of a sufficient distance apart to secure privacy to the inmates. Any regulation dealing with this subject should seek to effect a reform in the ventilation of the houses by stipulating that doorways should be at least 6 feet high and 3 feet wide, and that they should not be placed opposite each other. The use of doors and windows should be encouraged. It should also be provided that no dwelling-house be less than 3 fathoms long and the same measurement to the ridge.

It has been suggested that the natives should be induced to use raised bedplaces, which might be made of sawn slabs of timber or of interlaced boughs laid upon upright posts so as to form a platform on which the grass and mats might be spread. This, however, is not a Fijian institution, and it would be more difficult to insist upon the general adoption of it than upon the erection of high *yavu*. The latter, we think, should be insisted on; but at the same time the people should be encouraged to use raised bedplaces.

These suggestions doubtless savour of paternal legislation of an extreme kind, but, as indicating its necessity, it is not to be forgotten that the Tongans have of their own accord passed a sanitary law of a more stringent character than that now proposed, dealing, among other things, with house-building.

273. With regard to sanitation we believe that to effect a reformation in the state of native villages and their surroundings, where they have not the advantage of natural drainage, subsoil drainage is the only treatment that will be effective. This of course means a considerable initial expenditure of labour which would be extremely repugnant to the natives, the more so as they show an exceptional inaptitude for earth work. It would therefore, as a rule, cost less labour to rebuild a Fijian village on a site naturally drained. The Fiji Islands have hitherto been happily free from marsh fevers, such as are the bane of the population, native and foreign, in Melanesia

Melanesia and New Guinea, in India, Africa, and other tropical countries. But were this freedom to come to an end there can be no doubt that, without subsoil drainage, the village population in most of the alluvial and many of the littoral districts would be quickly extinguished. At present dysentery fills the place which these fevers would occupy, and adds largely to the mortality. The absence of such drainage is a standing invitation to any extraneous miasmatic poisons which may reach the country to become endemic.

The better observance of sanitary regulations as regards latrine accommodation, and the cleanliness and drainage of the villages generally, cannot, however, be expected until their supervision is put into the hands of Europeans, at least for a time. The keeping of pigs in villages should wherever possible be discouraged. They should be kept in fences outside the village.

To provide for the sanitation of the interior of the houses in cases where the system of raised bedplaces is not adopted, the most important matter is the removal and destruction of the flooring-grass at stated intervals. It is not enough to leave this to the care of any local native officer. To ensure regularity a law is required appointing one day in the year (or more if necessary) when every householder shall clear out his house and burn every scrap of flooring-grass, replacing it with new grass properly dried. The date would be printed in the Government Almanac, and published in *Na Mata* as it drew near. A penalty for neglect should be provided, part of which should go to the informer.

To ensure the carrying out of sanitary enactments, periodical inspection would be necessary. As at the present time there are not sufficient European officers for the purpose, reliable Fijians, natives of other provinces than those in which they are employed, might be selected as inspectors. In most cases, however, the Native Medical Practitioners might properly hold the appointment of Native Sanitary Inspectors with a small salary and a proportion of the fines inflicted upon their information. But we have more faith in the efficacy of our suggestions given under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws" to secure the observance of these recommendations, if they should be deemed worthy of adoption.

274. To summarise our conclusions under this head:—

- (1) Many towns are unhealthily situated.
- (2) Almost all the towns suffer from defective sanitation.
- (3) The houses are damp, and often ill-ventilated or subject to draughts.
- (4) The native system of bedplaces is pernicious.

The remedies we have to propose are,—

- (1) Insist on the *yavu* of houses being raised at least 4 feet above the ground, and free from surrounding hollows; accepting as an alternative a wooden floor 2 clear feet above the ground, or building on piles with 3 clear feet between the surface of the ground and the floor of the house. *Yavu* to be faced with stone and overlaid with stone or pebbles where possible.
- (2) Encourage the building of wooden, stone, wattle-and-plaster, or log-houses, whilst the communal system exists, so that it may leave the people provided with substantial houses. It might be found expedient to direct that each town, or certain towns in each district, shall build one house of this description every year. This would gradually attain its object, and would also prevent decentralisation.
- (3) Encourage the introduction and use of raised bedplaces (*vata*).
- (4) Procure the removal of towns from unhealthy sites. (See also under "Decentralisation").
- (5) In these new towns provide for buildings being a sufficient distance apart to secure privacy.
- (6) Provide also for a minimum size of dwelling-house and for ventilation.
- (7) Encourage the use of doors and windows.
- (8) Provide sanitary regulations dealing with these matters and with latrines, pig-keeping, and scavenging. Such regulations should be printed for circulation in each village.

- (9) A most important matter is effective supervision of sanitation ; and this could be best obtained in accordance with the suggestions made under the heads of "Decentralisation," "Hygienic Mission by European Women," and "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws."

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XIII.—DECENTRALISATION.

Digest of Replies.

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275. The tendency towards decentralisation is regarded by four correspondents as an important factor in bringing about the decrease of the population.

These correspondents advocate the concentration of villages as a remedy, and have in view as a result of their proposal the following reforms :—

- (1) Larger field of selection in marriage.
- (2) Removal of towns from their old sites and the poisonous influences surrounding them.
- (3) Sanitation of dwellings, and of village sites generally, on a proper system.
- (4) Accessibility for inspection by the Governor, superior officers of Government, missionaries, native officers, magistrates, and medical men ; and for better supervision in matters of cleanliness and general hygiene.
- (5) Prompt treatment of epidemics.
- (6) Increase of civilising influences by the eradication of the laziness, depression, and indifference which isolation produces.
- (7) Fewer opportunities to evade the requirements of the law.
- (8) Increased educational and administrative facilities,—the smaller number of towns permitting the selection of superior men as town chiefs, teachers, and ministers of religion.
- (9) Increase of healthy rivalry and excitement among the people as a substitute for their former life of activity in war and intrigue.

This subject is also treated of indirectly by a number of other writers in connection with the subject of "Consanguineous Marriage."

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276. The reason for the existence of large towns in civilised and semi-civilised communities lies in the convenience which such centres afford for mutual defence and protection from enemies, and for the prosecution of commerce and the industrial arts. In Fiji in the present day neither of these reasons apply to the native community. There are no enemies from which an aggregation of inhabitants would immediately afford protection, no wild animals that would thereby be kept at a distance, and there is not among the bulk of the native population any established system of transactions to which the name of commerce could be applied. Moreover the industries in which the natives engage are almost wholly of an agricultural nature, and we are not accustomed to think of town or village life as a necessary adjunct of agricultural industry.

The existence of village life in Fiji, doubtless, had its origin in the fact that primitive man is above all things a gregarious animal. Necessity for defending the community against enemies resulted in the perpetuation of village life. In savage times no other form of existence was possible, and, as a consequence, the whole of the native polity that has been handed down from prehistoric times, or that has grown up in modern days, is suited to village life and to village life only.

Proceeding therefore on the principle that in the betterment of a people advantage should be taken of existing institutions it is suggested that the sanitary and social economy of the natives would be reformed by concentrating the villages.

277. Under the head of "Consanguineous Marriage" it was pointed out that marriage among inhabitants of the same district, and often of the same village, and even of the same family, was very frequent, while that of couples belonging to different districts was comparatively rare ; and that by reason of the greater

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greater restriction of natives to their own districts the area from which partners might be selected was perhaps more circumscribed now than formerly.

It is also shown by the statistics collected by the Commission that in twelve villages, which may be accepted as presenting a fair sample of the state of things throughout the Colony, two-fifths of the married people (actually 42 per cent.) are related, most of them being orthogamous first cousins, while one-third are natives of the same village, and only one-fourth of the married couples had not been born and brought up in the same community.

The vitality of the Townspeople's and of the *Veidavolani's* children is greater than the vitality of the children of the other classes. But, notwithstanding these facts, the Commission think that any advantage gained by the constant intermarriage of relations and neighbours is of a very doubtful value. The amount of hereditary disease that may in this way be conserved cannot fail to be considerable. The mental tone which the intermarriage of *veidavolani* tends to reduce to monotony and uniformity cannot be expected to improve by almost continuous intermarriage within villages of perhaps a hundred souls or less. And we are convinced that the mental tone of the native must be rendered firmer and more susceptible of impression before much good can be done to him physically.

It also appears certain that among any of the Polynesian peoples who are said to be increasing, particularly the Tokalau Islanders and the Samoans, the marriage of cousins has always been forbidden; in the former case, at least, with the penalty of death for transgression in uncivilised times.

We believe that the concentration of towns would certainly give an opportunity of wider selection in marriage.

At present natives live for the most part within their own districts, though natives of those villages which have boats (and their number is many) certainly see more of the world than natives formerly did. But in casually visiting other places there is no opportunity of making matches unless the parties are related. The relatives of a girl would not give her to a stranger unless he were resident among them and proved himself to be a useful man in the community, or unless there were some ancient friendship between the villages to which they respectively belonged. Even in cases where a man succeeds in marrying a woman who is a stranger to his own village, she is not as a rule welcome among the women who are to be her future companions.

We believe that the bringing of different families into contact, together with the adoption of the proposals we make relating to "Facilitation of Marriages," would naturally result in the marriage of individuals who would not before have been available to each other, and would gradually develop such beneficial influences as are expected to flow from what has been called sound breeding.

Of course in time the inhabitants of the concentrated towns would become related; but before that we hope the Fijian will have thrown off many of the shackles of ancient custom that now cramp his energies, and that the communal system will have given place to a more advanced polity fitting him to cope with modern conditions.

It cannot be said that the concentration of villages is the direction towards which the people would naturally tend, but we believe that concentration is a shorter and surer and safer way to individualism than would be found in the easier process of separation. We are aware that concentration of population is the reverse of the method pursued in the past by chiefs who conquered districts and took the surviving inhabitants captive. When the captives were allowed to live they were sent out into small settlements in order, it was said, that they might multiply. This policy may have been based partly on the fact that increase of population could be better gauged in a small village than in a large town, but we think that it was mainly on the principle that the chief could deal more easily with small communities than with large ones, and that there was less danger of intrigue, insurrection, or combined action in the one case than in the other.

278. The tendency of the native race is towards decentralisation. The number of villages is annually increasing, for at the Census of 1891 it was found that while the population

population had decreased by at least 4,000 during the decade, the number of towns had increased from 1,319 to 1,398, or at the rate of about 6 per cent. The reason of this tendency may be found in the fact that at one time a village was perhaps synonymous with a *mataqali* (clan). But during the past century the numerous wars and occasional massacres had the effect of dispersing many towns. One of the correspondents testifies to having seen eleven villages burned in one day. He also knows of forty towns and villages on Vanualevu, with an average population of from 100 to 500, having been destroyed in war during the years 1863-4. Of these only five were ever reoccupied, and then with only a remnant of their former occupants. Similar occurrences took place in other parts of the country, and in many instances fugitive villagers joined themselves to other villages, for the sake of safety. Many of the tribes were broken and became scattered over the face of the country, the result being that many of the villages of to-day contain the remains of several tribes. These, however, in consequence of the feeling of security which settled government has produced are generally desirous of going back to the sites on which their former villages stood. The tendency, in fact, of every branch of every clan is to make a town for itself, where it may have everything its own mediocre way, and stand apart from families whose interests are not precisely identical with its own. A town would thus become, as many of them originally were, synonymous with a *mataqali* but the numbers would be much fewer than was originally the case. This feeling may perhaps be regarded as an effort towards that individual freedom which no form of communism can ever impart; for communism at best is only organised selfishness.

279. With the other advantages which the advocates of centralisation expect to result from the enforcement of their proposals we agree generally.

If a Buliship (District), or half a Buliship, were formed into a town, well laid out, under the management of a superior man as chief of the town, with efficient town police, with good houses, built well apart, with a fence around each compound to secure a reasonable degree of privacy, with a good and reliable water-supply, with a village crèche or kindergarten, with superior men as ministers and teachers, and with a village midwife, we think that the contact between individuals would sharpen the wits of all and rouse them from the indifferent lethargy which characterises the inhabitants of small villages, and gradually inspire a degree of intelligence which would fit the individual for his responsibilities, a condition that will never be attained by allowing the various *mataqalis* to drift asunder and isolate themselves, as is their present tendency.

280. The question arises, How will the people regard such a change?

In view of this question we put to those of our native witnesses who were capable of understanding the subject the query—

“Do you think that small villages, or that large and concentrated settlements would be best?”

The replies we received were all in favour of concentrated towns.

One witness pointed out that the towns of to-day were constantly getting smaller, with evil results.

Another said,—

“The people would not recognise that the concentration of towns was being done for their good. They would only think of having to plant farther away from their town. The difficulty would be their whims. They wish to live and eat and plant at their individual will. I think it could be managed in Serua if properly discussed.”

The opinion of another was,—

“The concentration of towns would be a good thing. A place like Sawakasa should have two towns one on the coast and one inland on account of the planting land. Taking people off their lands is dangerous. Look at Suvavou, they were taken off their lands and now are quarrelling with their neighbours. The thing could be done and the houses at the same time be improved.”

With the view of further testing the point we put to the witness a question concerning two tribes which, although in one district, are known to be mutually jealous. The reply was,—

“If Government decreed that Kuku and Nausori should go into a town together it could readily be done. They would bear it because the Government ordered it.”

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He continued,—

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“ If the people understood the cause of the decrease they would exert themselves and carry out any measures which the Government might decide upon for checking the decrease. As it is, they say, ‘ Oh, what can we do? We don’t understand the cause of this. It is for the authorities to devise remedies.’ A great deal of evil arises out of the want of a co-operative spirit in the people. One man or one chief thinks this, another that, and they cannot be got to act together. People do not care for the fact that the population of Fiji is decreasing or that other provinces are decreasing, as long as their own town is not.”

281. There is one great difficulty in the way of the concentration of towns, apart from that of mere prejudice, viz:—the provision of land for the planting requirements of the aggregated settlement.

There is an average of 42 acres of land to every native man, woman, and child, which is a far greater quantity than they can possibly make use of.

The ownership of land is vested in *matagali*, although, in at least two of the provinces of the Colony the land has been subdivided among the heads of the families constituting the *matagali*. Generally, however, natives have no objection to the free use of any unappropriated part of the *matagali*’s land by any member of the *matagali*. When *matagali* become extinct the land is presumed to fall to the Crown as *ultimus hæres* either for its own use or for subdivision among other *matagali* who may require it. This provision, however, has never been acted on, although since its enactment there is no doubt that some *matagali* have become extinct. But any *matagali* that owns land will never lack for members if outsiders can raise a claim to relationship with it by marriage, or in any other way can get themselves looked upon as members of the land-owning but expiring *matagali*. We may, in passing, express our opinion that it would probably do good if Government were to step in and lay claim to the lands of some *matagali* that is known to be really defunct in order to vest it in some other *matagali* whose lands are less ample in extent. It would give the natives something to live for, for land is one of the three things in which a native has really any living interest. The ordinary native will give himself more beneficial mental activity over the potential ownership of a piece of land than over any other conceivable subject. On its account a good man will sacrifice friendship, will incur enmities, will perjure himself cheerfully, and will consider himself amply rewarded for all this unwonted exertion if he ultimately succeed in possessing himself of a plot of the coveted soil, or in preventing its possession by any one outside of his own *matagali*.

The principal tribal division in former times was the *matanitu*, a body sprung from a common ancestor, and usually containing two titular chiefs, the *Roko Tui*, or spiritual chief, *i.e.*, the chief who had the blood of the common ancestor in its purest form, and the *Vunivalu*, or executive chief, sprung from a younger branch of the *Roko Tui*’s family. The *matanitu* was subdivided into *matagali*, from three or four to ten or eleven in number, generally founded by the immediate descendants of the common ancestor; and these were, in their turn, subdivided into *tokatoka* or *yavusa* as they became numerous. In former times it was common in the two large islands for each *matagali* to inhabit its own little fortified village, surrounded by its planting lands, but ready to garrison the chief’s town in time of threatened attack. The *matanitu* itself not infrequently formed part of a larger confederation and was tributary, either as *bati* (borderers) or *qali* (subjects), to the chief of another *matanitu* who had acquired a position of supremacy through the fortune of war. In these days the people have been so much reduced in numbers that in some instances the members of an entire *matanitu* are scarcely sufficient to people one small village, and in other cases whole *matagali* have become extinct or have been absorbed as the *tokatoka* or subdivisions of the *matagali* most nearly allied to them by marriage. The result is that the old *matagali* boundaries have been forgotten, and the proprietary unit in all places in which land is still owned communally is regarded as being the *matanitu* or tribe.

As the *matanitu* of to-day either constitutes a village, or is contained within three or four villages, it is not unusual for the natives themselves to ask that their boundaries be registered by villages or townships, or that several villages be included within a common boundary. This form of division is peculiarly applicable to those parts

parts of the colony in which the tribes have been so much scattered by war that the villages are inhabited by fragments of broken tribes living together indiscriminately. Lands are therefore being registered by townships wherever practicable.

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Within the tribal boundaries the *yavu* (or houses site) and the *teitei* (or cultivated land), are inherited and held by individuals. The waste lands are held in common under the control of the chief, who allots them to any member of the tribe who desires to reclaim and so appropriate a portion of them. The sites of abandoned villages are however still regarded as the property of the heirs of the *mataqali* who originally lived in it, if any remain.

A difficulty exists in the vested interests of the chiefs under the tenure known as *cokavaki* and described in paragraph 148 of this Report. These interests, if the scheme is to succeed, would have to be respected as far as possible in choosing sites for the concentrated villages.

282. We think that only such land should be occupied by the inhabitants of the concentrated towns as is owned by the *mataqalis* represented therein.

As far as possible the planting lands of a concentrated town should be situated within a radius of 4 miles of the town. Even now natives of the smaller towns plant at greater distances from their homes for the purpose of maintaining their boundaries.

If it be found that any *mataqali* is deficient of planting land the provisions of the Native Lands Ordinance should be put in force with the view of acquiring land for its use.

At present the taxes of a town are occasionally grown on lands belonging to other communities, and there would therefore be no insurmountable difficulty in extending this principle to the reallocation of planting lands within a township composed of persons bound together by ties of relationship. Every endeavour should be made to vest the whole of the lands in the town, so that people who may drift out of the town should have no land on which to settle and plant.

We are convinced that if the movement could be begun under favourable auspices, with the intelligent consent of some of the principal chiefs, it would, when the people comprehended its object, meet with their sympathy and support. It is unlikely that any town would contain more than 100 families. The actual quantity of land required for the use of 100 heads of families to plant on is not in the aggregate very extensive.

283. Two things would be necessary to the inauguration of the system viz:—

- (1) A thorough knowledge of the boundaries of the lands owned by tribes as at present recognised.
- (2) An equal knowledge of the inter-relations of the various *mataqali*.

Both these matters are being ascertained by the Native Lands Commission.

We would, however, propose that the second should be ascertained sooner than it can be done by the Lands Commission. This might be attained by the issue of a schedule of particulars to be filled up in each town. This schedule should comprise the following details:—

SCHEDULE.

(The following are the headings which should be properly tabulated when printed for the purpose of obtaining the particulars.)

Particulars relating to the town of
in the district of

province of

1. How many *mataqali* are represented in the town?
2. Give their names.
3. Is this town called after another previously existing town situate elsewhere?
4. If so, please give particulars as to how the previous town ceased to exist; stating who was then the chief, and why this town is called by the same name (1) If actually known; (2) If traditional.
5. If not named after another town why does it bear its present name?
6. Is this town an offshoot of any other town? If so, of what town?
7. Is this town affiliated with any other town? If so, what town?
8. Does this town have the undivided services of a *Turaga ni koro*, an *ovisa*, and a teacher?

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9. What is the name (*ai cavucavu*) by which the town is known in presenting *magiti*?
10. What is approximately the period for which the town has existed under its present name?
11. If previously existing under any other name, please give it.
12. Has the town any other name? If so, what is it?

(The following information should be procured with reference to each *mataqali* in each town.)

1. Name of *mataqali*.
2. Status of *mataqali* (*tutu ni vanua*).
3. What is the name of the main tribe to which the *mataqali* belongs (*yaca levu ni mataqali*)?
4. Who is the chief of the *mataqali*?
5. Who is the present titular "*Vunivalu*" of the tribe?
6. Population of the *mataqali* within the town—men, women, boys, girls, and total.
7. With what other *mataqali* is this *mataqali tauvu*, and where do these other *mataqalis* live, and where *vu* from?
8. What is the *kalou vu* of the *mataqali*?
9. Is any part of this *mataqali* situate elsewhere? If so, where?
10. How did the *mataqali* come here?
11. If *se'd* from elsewhere, when and how?
12. Any tradition of origin, mythological or otherwise?
13. Was this *mataqali* a *tokatoka* or branch of any other *mataqali*? If so, what *mataqali*?
14. The name of the original home of the *mataqali* (*yavu makawa*).
15. Under what name (*ai cavucavu*) does the *mataqali* receive its share of *magiti*?
16. What is the *cavu ni taga* of the *mataqali*?
17. How do the names arise?
18. If any, what is the family cognisance (*i.e.* shrine of the *kalou vu*—*nai vakatakilakila ni kawa—se waga ni yalo ni kalou vu*)?
19. Battle-cry of the *mataqali*—(*ai vakacaucau ni ravu*).
20. Does the *mataqali* have any particular occupation or trade?
21. What are the names of the *tokatoka* of the *mataqali*?
22. Give the names of the *yavusa* or *bati ni lovo* of each *tokatoka*.
23. Are there any *vulagi taukei* who have been absorbed by the *mataqali*? Give particulars.
24. Do the members of this *mataqali* marry, as a rule, into any particular *mataqali*? If so, why?
25. Is there any *mataqali* into which they are not allowed to marry? If so, why?
26. With what *mataqali* has the *mataqali* become amalgamated or affiliated through stress of war, marriage or other contingencies?

It would not be desirable that it should contain any reference to lands. The information might be best procured by two trained natives visiting each village and ascertaining and filling in the required answers. In this way half-a-dozen enumerators might acquire the particulars in a few months. When this is done, the Government would be in a position to see which *mataqali* would be most acceptable to others, and whether certain towns had an hereditary antipathy to others, and could take measures for their aggregation or separation accordingly.

284. It would be necessary that the sites of the concentrated villages should be carefully selected. There is, we think, no lack of available sites for as many large towns as could contain the whole population; but special care should be exercised in the selection of sites so that each concentrated town might be a nucleus of order, prosperity, and comfort.

On the selection of a site it would be necessary to cause the provincial prisoners to plant large quantities of food in its vicinity beforehand, which would be available for the use of the people when building houses.

285. In these concentrated towns every opportunity should be taken, so long as the present communal system exists, to build substantial and permanent houses of stone, lime, or wood, as suggested in our recommendation given under the head of "Insanitary Dwellings and Domestic Habits," thus paving the way for the time when, through change in the social system, a man will not be able to obtain the co-operative assistance of his neighbours in building his house.

By the time that every family is so supplied the people will be more ready for individual responsibility, and the existence of these houses will permit the new system to be ushered in under favourable auspices.

286. We believe that much good is done by the inspection of native villages; but efforts in that direction are at present practically useless owing to the wide area over which they have to be spread. It would be possible in the concentrated towns to maintain a system of inspection and to organise sanitary measures on a proper basis, to improve the means of attendance on the sick, and to increase educational facilities materially. Under this system increased attention could be given to the construction

construction and maintenance of suitable roads, and generally the effect would be in the direction of improved administration, as superior men could be employed in the posts of chiefs of towns and officers. At present such Regulations as forbid certain things being done are fairly well attended to, but those that require the performance of particular acts, such as the annual planting of useful trees, and provision of certain quantities of food, and of food for the sick, are, in most instances, a dead-letter. In the large towns these matters could be made the subject of more effective inspection than is at present possible.

And while we subscribe to the anticipations of the good results that may flow from miscegenation, better houses, and improved sanitation, we have perhaps more faith in the possibility of better administration, and in the increased facilities for inspection, which the concentrated towns would afford, as the basis of administrative reforms.

We sympathise in a measure with the correspondent who writes—"How little have attempted innovations done to elevate either the individual or the community when they have not sprung from the people themselves, or been assimilated into their habits and ways of living!" But the value of the innovations that have sprung from the people themselves, or are likely to do so, might be gauged by a consideration of the condition to which their own exertions had brought them when they first came in contact with civilisation. It is safe to say that, of their own motion, the Fijians have drawn from civilisation only the evil or doubtful elements, while the good have always been adopted in obedience to the suggestion of the missionaries or the Government. On the whole, however, the Fijian of to-day has little or no live policy beyond mere prejudice. He does or refuses to do those things that his fathers did or refused to do, without regard to their present applicability, but merely because his fathers did so.

It appears to us, therefore, that the best way to break down this wall of prejudice, which towns and individuals have erected against one another, is to bring the people more together and to make their interests more identical.

One of the main requirements of the race is constant supervision, in order to induce the cultivation and assimilation of such conditions and ideas as are necessary to advancement, and to prevent their perversion after they have been introduced—a tendency to which the Fijian is peculiarly prone. The opportunity for such supervision is nowhere to be obtained as readily as in the concentrated towns. In fact, it is, to our mind, the lack of this immediate supervision and its impossibility under existing circumstances which, since Cession, has prevented, and still stands in the way of, the natives' physical and moral advancement. Something has been done in this direction, but much more would have been achieved if the native communities had been more accessible to supervision. Civilisation knows no equivalent for the old restraints which compelled obedience to recognised principles, but we are convinced that supervision is the best substitute for them, and that the concentration of towns is the only condition under which salutary supervision is possible.

XIV.—NATIVE TAXATION SYSTEM.

Digest of Replies.

287. Twelve years ago, among the adverse criticisms of the Native Taxation System by the Europeans in the Colony, it was asserted that the taxes bore so heavily upon the native race as to be largely responsible for the excessive mortality.

In the correspondence under consideration, however, the Native Taxation System is cited by only six writers, and three of these mention it but to remark that the charges made against the system are exaggerated, or that it has no particular bearing on the question of the native decrease.

One writer, in advocating the modification of the "present restrictive communal system," observes that the Native Taxation Scheme is the backbone of that system; and that if it were abolished the communal system would fall to the ground. Without admitting the truth of this observation (for we believe the

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the practice of *kerekere* and the customary law in relation to land tenure to be the backbone of the system) we cannot help remarking that even if this opinion were correct it would indicate that the system was well suited to native custom and native ideas since it has become so thoroughly assimilated to the native polity in the comparatively short period of eighteen years.

Another writer also objects to the system on principle. He cites, in support of his view, the opinion of a missionary, expressed twelve years ago, who remarked that, though acceptable to the chiefs on account of the large amount of coin it places at their disposal, it is irksome and distasteful to the people, who regard it as slavery to have their tax in cash refused, when proffered, and to be compelled to work for several months every year on the Government plantations.

We are in a position to say,—

- (1) That the Native Taxation Scheme does not place a large amount of coin at the disposal of the chiefs. Only the *Buli* receives a percentage of the District Refund. The *Roko* does not receive a proportion as is generally supposed.
- (2) That the natives generally do not of their own motion seek to pay in cash.
- (3) That there are no Government plantations. The tax-produce is planted by the people on their own land—selected by themselves; and that natives are not compelled to work for several months in the year on any tax-plantation.

288. Some objections are made regarding details of the working of the Native Taxation System.

It is pointed out that much time is wasted by natives in discussing the performance of work and in travelling to and from the scene of their operations. A native it is said regards all this as work, and is content to rest after these labours, and leave the cultivation of his yam-garden to his wife and family. We believe there is a good deal of truth in this; but people who are given to idleness will probably find an excuse for resting under any circumstances.

Another writer mentions that the Native Taxation System is used by chiefs as a lever to help them in other levies. We can find no evidence to support this statement, nor do we know of more than occasional instances of "other levies" of an illegitimate nature having been made, and we do not think that the Native Taxation System did anything towards assisting these irregularities. It is further mentioned that in certain places in the Colony the cocoanut crop is used up in the payment of natives taxes, and that the *tabu* is allowed to remain on the nuts for eleven months in the year. The first is a question of fact which would doubtless depend upon the yield of cocoanuts and the ruling price of copra in each particular year. As regards the second point, we believe that harm has been done by the persistent manner in which in some provinces the *tabu* has been maintained on the cocoanuts until every district in the province has paid its assessment. This matter has, since the receipt of these replies to the Colonial Secretary's Circular, been inquired into and dealt with by the Provincial Department, as noted hereafter.

It is suggested by one writer, by way of remedy, that payment of taxes in cash or in kind should be optional and that the hut-tax as applied to the natives of some of the South African Colonies is worthy of consideration. It is suggested by another that the mother of a family of a given number of living children should be held to exempt her husband from the payment of native taxes.

We shall proceed to discuss these suggestions.

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289. The reasons for the adoption of a tax in kind have been so exhaustively set forth in published official documents that it is unnecessary to recapitulate them here; it is with the practical working of the system that we are here concerned.

The Native Taxation System may be described as a land tax upon the natives, annually assessed by the Legislative Council upon consideration of the population

population and productiveness respectively of each province. The kind and amount of produce each village shall contribute is left to the discretion of the Provincial and District Assessment Boards which include all the leading natives of the province and district respectively, but the cultivation of all produce, except copra, is generally carried on under the supervision of European Tax Inspectors. The Government disposes of all the produce raised, either by calling for public tender or by arrangement with the purchaser. The total assessment for last year was £19,240. After deducting the amount of the assessment from the contribution of each province, the balance is returned to the natives in the form of surplus taxes to be apportioned among the people in proportion to the assiduity of each village community. The amount thus returned to the natives averaged during the last two years £9,550 per annum. During the year 1892 the natives contributed produce of the following values:—sugar-cane, £4,768; cotton, £733;* copra, £17,048; timber, £468; tobacco, £648; yams, £953; *yaqona*, £725; maize, £4,366; sundries, £517;—total, £30,226.

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It may be safely assumed that if the present taxation system were abolished none of the crops enumerated above, except copra, and a little tobacco would be grown for sale by the natives. Sugar-cane, the most remunerative, assuredly would not, for its cultivation requires a degree of combination and sustained effort that is quite beyond the power of the natives without the assistance of Government. And while the trade of the Colony would be the poorer by some £10,000, and a number of country storekeepers, who profit by the surplus taxes refunded to the natives, would be losers, it is certain that the natives would not be the better for the extended leisure that immunity from taxation would afford them.

290. It might be supposed that compulsory measures of sanitation would be more easily carried out if we were not confronted with the justice and practical necessity of directly taxing the natives, but we do not believe that an addition to the natives' already ample leisure would by any means induce them towards increased exertion in that direction.

The natives could not be exempted from direct taxation without injustice to the rest of the community, to whom they stand in the proportion of seven to one. Out of the 4,953,920 acres in the Colony they own over 4,500,000, or an average of 42 acres a head, which, for the first time in the history of their race, they can enjoy without fear of molestation by an enemy. Upon a liberal estimate they pay no more than £4,000 per annum in indirect taxation, while the cost of their government alone exceeds £16,000 per annum. Yet, however defensible the principle of directly taxing the natives may be on the score of justice, we should not recommend its continuance if its abandonment would help in practically solving the problem of the decrease of the race, still less if we were assured that it was responsible for the excessive mortality. But on the contrary we believe that so long as the natives lack the stimulus to exertion, such as fear of poverty or desire for wealth which urge civilised races to be industrious, compulsory work of some description is necessary for their wellbeing and preservation. Many years will elapse before the altered conditions of their life will furnish them with this stimulus, and, in the meantime, relief from such healthy agricultural labour as is involved in the providing of the annual taxes would be an ill-considered kindness.

291. Any recommendation to discontinue the direct taxation of the natives might well be met by the plea of necessity. The native taxes form nearly two-sevenths of the total revenue of a Colony whose expenditure is already curtailed to the lowest point consistent with bare efficiency. If they were abolished the deficit would have to be made up by a large increase in the Customs tariff or by a land tax, probably by both means. Such an additional burden upon the European settlers and immigrant labourers being out of the question, the system could only be abandoned upon the substitution of another scheme better suited to preserve the race, and not less productive of revenue. Two have been suggested; a hut-tax, and a poll-tax in money.

The

* £594 in addition received in January, 1893, should be credited to 1892.

The former we may dismiss without discussion. No sooner were the natives to be made aware that their houses were to be taxed than the families now accommodated in five or six houses would herd together in one, and the evils of defective sanitation that we are most desirous of overcoming would be greatly increased. The proposal of imposing a money tax presents, we think, difficulties and objections that are less apparent, perhaps, but not less difficult to overcome.

In view of the tendency towards individual tenure of land, the province of Lau, and such parts of Lomaiviti as are extensively planted with cocoanuts, may be reaching a stage of development at which they might be assessed in coin without much danger of a loss of revenue, for a few years at least, or of injustice to the natives, for the competition among copra-buyers is perhaps sufficiently keen to secure the natives against any sudden depression of prices; but it would of course be impossible to apply to a single province, or a part of a province, a system that would be impracticable throughout the rest of the Colony. It is to be borne in mind that it is only in the copra-producing districts that each individual has merchantable produce within his reach without depending upon his fellows for assistance. Throughout Vitilevu a large majority of the natives have no copra at all, nor could they by the individual cultivation, within their own districts, of any other product earn sufficient money to pay their taxes in coin. Sugar-growing and timber-cutting can only be carried on by co-operation; and the local market for cotton, tobacco, yams, and *yagona* is too restricted to enable any but a very small proportion of the adult male population to provide their taxes by planting and selling these products to local traders. A large majority, therefore, would be driven to leave their districts in order to earn their taxes in money by working upon plantations, or by casual employment in the towns of Suva and Levuka. We need scarcely add to the evidence of a gentleman of such prolonged experience as the writer of Paper No. 11 to prove that, in the absence of the father, the child's chances of survival, already deplorably low, are reduced to a minimum. So many instances of the death of children in this way have occurred, notwithstanding the provision of the native labour laws preventing married men from engaging as plantation labourers, that we can only express our regret that the native labour laws have not been so strictly administered in the past as to make the desertion of wife and children by married men, absconding to work upon plantations, more rare.

292. The native labour laws have been somewhat irrelevantly accused of causing discontent in the native mind upon the ground that they restrict the married men from engaging for a term exceeding three months at a distance from their homes. The writer of Paper No. 27 says, "Thus the man, who of all others ought to earn money for the support of those dependent on him, is debarred from doing so." It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to remark that the Fijian's staff of life is not purchased by money but by industry in the cultivation of his plantation at home, and that, in other countries besides Fiji, men who have assumed the responsibilities of families are not permitted to leave them for lengthened periods dependent upon the public for support. Cases that occurred last year in Lomaiviti and Kadavu of married men having engaged for twelve months' service in distant provinces have resulted in the former instance in the death of infant children, and in the latter in the adultery of the wife, and consequent proceedings for divorce. The writer of Paper No. 11, a gentleman of long experience in the district of which he writes, says,—

"The absence of husbands from home results in infant mortality through the mothers neglecting them (the children) while working or mekeing. A mania seems to have possession of married men in Wailevu to go to work on plantations. But for Government regulations the district would be depopulated of its able men every year."

But setting aside the disastrous effect upon the vitality of the race which the wholesale migration of the able-bodied men would produce, the imposition of a money tax would fail in its object so far as raising revenue is concerned. A large number of natives, unable or unwilling to earn sufficient money to pay their taxes, would not return home, but would wander about the country, and gravitate towards the towns of Suva and Levuka, whose attractions, in the opportunities for obtaining spirits and for indulging the lower appetites, have already so strong a fascination for Fijians that

that numbers of them, even now, loiter about these towns living a hand to mouth existence, supporting themselves by occasional jobs and by petty thefts. These natives, though comparatively few in number, fare worse in the matter of food than they would in their own villages, and cause uneasiness to the authorities who are unprovided with the means of sanitation for vagrant natives; but within a few months of the imposition of a tax in money the number would be increased ten-fold, and the Colony would have to face the problem of providing for the police supervision of several hundreds of demoralised natives who, growing insolent from impunity, and mistaking forbearance for timidity, would become the nucleus of a criminal population, and an ever-increasing danger to the community.

To meet this danger an increase of expenditure for the police establishment would be required simultaneously with a loss of revenue. The experience of Tonga and Samoa, where a tax in coin is in force, shows that a large proportion of the natives obstinately neglect to pay their tax, preferring to challenge the Government to proceed to extremities; yet in both of these countries every native can own individually enough cocoanuts to pay the tax ten times over. The Fijians, destitute for the most part of the means of raising money by individual effort within their own district, and no longer urged to do so by their chiefs, would be constantly in arrears, and the Government would have to face the alternative of imprisoning whole districts or of foregoing the tax.

It is too readily forgotten that every Fijian is a peasant landowner, and an agriculturist. The policy of the Government should always be to encourage the small agriculturists to remain upon the soil. The system of taxation in kind affords a reason for preventing them from deserting their land, their wives, and families; a tax in money on the other hand would force many of them to leave their homes and encourage them to loiter about the European settlements.

293. It has been suggested that the natives should be given the option of paying their tax in money or in kind. We believe such a scheme to be impracticable owing to the difficulties, risks, and expense of collection. The machinery for collecting the tax in produce would still have to be maintained; the natives, with the declared intention of paying in money, would neglect to plant produce until it was too late, and, at the close of each year, the money tax would practically become compulsory and would entail all the evils indicated above.

294. Since, as we believe, necessity demands the continuance of the present Native Taxation System we think it well, with the view of suggesting remedies for such defects as actually exist, to enumerate the principal charges made against it.

(1) *That the Assessment is excessive.*—The assessment, as we have already said, is based upon the two factors of the reproductiveness of the soil and the number of able-bodied men in the province. It varies from an average of 5s. 1d. to £1 3s. 8d. *per caput* of the males between the ages of sixteen and sixty,—the general average for the Colony being 13s. 10³/₄d. That it is not excessive is shown by the fact that in connection with the system the natives annually grow surplus produce to the value of nearly £10,000, or 50 per cent. over the amount of their assessment, which is refunded to them in coin, and also by the circumstance that the actual labour expended in producing this result does not exceed thirty full working-days, or one-tenth of a native's time. This term of labour is occasionally spread over a period of forty or more half-days (but this we believe to be the exception). While we by no means consider the assessment as a whole to be excessive we think it probable that the assessment of provinces is susceptible of rearrangement so as to equalise the incidence of taxation by transferring to those provinces that are obviously under-assessed a portion of the burden laid upon the others.

(2) *That defects in the details cause waste of labour and produce.*—This charge belongs rather to the past than to the present. Such waste of energy as exists is that alluded to by the writer of Paper No. 33. Much time is spent in meetings and discussions before any real work is done, and this the native regards as work. This defect however is inseparable from any system in which a people addicted to the *cacoethes loquendi* are concerned. The waste of produce does not now

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we believe exceed the loss accounted for by the ordinary risk of transport, still somewhat crude and primitive.

(3) *That in interfering with the natives' liberty to sell their produce to whom they will, and to live how or where they please, a spirit of discontent is created that is bearing heavily upon the death-rate.*—This complaint could only be made of the copra-producing districts, for sugar, cotton, maize, and tobacco would not be produced at all but for the present taxation system. But even in the copra districts the natives are perfectly free to choose their market as soon as the assessed taxes are paid. We have satisfied ourselves that whatever measure of discontent may exist is centred rather in the necessity for paying taxes at all than in the system of collection. The native view of the question is that, as they ceded the country to Britain, and permit foreigners to reside in it, they should be paid by the Europeans for these concessions instead of being called upon to contribute to the maintenance of government.

(4) *That in copra-producing districts the prolonged "tabu" upon the nuts, and in sugar-growing districts the absence of the men for lengthened periods in the cane-fields, is the direct cause of infant mortality.*—The evil of a prolonged and exclusive *tabu* restricting the use of cocoanuts as food has been lately recognised by the Government, and orders have been issued that certain trees should be set apart for the use of the women and children. In Lau, however, the *tabu* does not apply to nuts used for food, but only to the sale of copra to Europeans before the assessment has been completed. Seeing how largely cocoanuts are used by nursing-mothers and young children we think that this rule should be made to apply, even at the risk of a small loss of revenue, to all districts that pay taxes in copra, and that the future should be provided for by compelling the natives to carry out the provisions of the Planting Regulations with regard to the annual planting of cocoanuts.

Our inquiries show that the people of the Serua Province, who reside 30 miles from the cane-fields (which is by far the greatest distance natives are required to travel in connection with tax-work), are absent from home twenty-four days in the year, but never for longer periods than five days at one time; but we are assured by the ex-Buli Serua that, if a mother and infant are without relatives who will undertake to tend them during the husband's absence, it is permissible for him to claim exemption from the service on which he is called away from home. It is, however, to be remembered that it is the direct interest of officers connected with the taxation system, from the European Tax Inspector to the native village chief (*Turaga ni koro*) to urge the largest possible number of labourers into the plantations, and to discount excuses for absence at the time set apart for communal labour. The former officer is pardonably anxious to see the tax-work done properly, the latter to lighten the labour of his people by its subdivision. Though we believe the statement to be without serious foundation that cane-planting entails prolonged absence from home or brings hardship upon the women and children, yet we think that, to guard against all possibility of such a thing, no natives should be permitted to plant produce for taxes at a greater distance than 10 miles from their home, and that their absence from home in the fields should never exceed four days at any one time; while the strictest orders should be issued to the effect that men who are responsible for the care of sick persons and of nursing-mothers should be exempted from service until the necessity for special care has passed away.

295. One suggestion, broadly stated, is that immunity from taxation should be made an inducement towards the rearing of large families. Every tax-paying male who has a family of a certain number of living children should, it is suggested, enjoy immunity from the planting or preparation of tax-produce, forfeiting such exemption upon the death of any of his children below the specified number. The number of exemptions under this proposal would not be numerous; and we would have recommended that the proposal should be tried, and even that fathers of living children under one year of age might be exempted from work in connection with Native Taxes until the child attained its first year, but are prevented by the circumstance that similar experiments have already been made in Hawaii with no satisfactory result.

296. We would suggest that in copra-producing districts the native communities might be judiciously advised—without, however, being in any way constrained—to place less dependence upon copra as the means of procuring their assessed taxes. If they could be induced to do so, and to cultivate rice, tobacco, or cotton, the change would probably have a beneficial effect on the native dietary while extending the practice of agricultural industry, which is, moreover, one of the main objects of the taxation system.

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XV.—DISEASES OF CHILDREN TENDING TO PERMANENTLY INJURE HEALTH.

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297. It has been observed by some of the correspondents that although Fijians have a splendid physical development they lack the power of endurance.

This condition it is thought reacts upon their children, inasmuch as it brings them into the world inadequately furnished with physical stamina. But besides these morbid conditions the Fijian infant is particularly subject to some acute infirmities which permanently affect its constitution. It might be supposed that, having run the gauntlet of so many hostile influences, the survivors must necessarily be individuals of robust physique, but the correspondents do not concur in that view; and it is by some writers believed that the various illnesses to which Fijian children are subject result not only in a heavy infant death-rate but in the weakening of the survivors.

In addition to such causes as immaturity at birth, pulmonary atelectasis, and other congenital diseases and weaknesses which immediately affect the death-rate, the majority of Fijian infants are liable to *ramusu* (explained hereafter), while almost all contract the disease known as *coko* (yaws or sibbens). The surgical treatment to which children are subjected by native doctresses in cases of *ramusu* and other illnesses is looked upon as likely to permanently affect the constitution of the individual; while yaws it is said may even react as severely as tertiary syphilis in a parent, and leave effects in after life prejudicial to the bearing of healthy children.

It is also believed that the native customs of keeping pigs in their towns and having pigsties outside the dwelling-houses, and within a short distance of the sleeping-places, give rise to worms in children, a condition said to be also enormously prevalent in adults.

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298. Fijian children are subject to the same illnesses as European infants; but the diseases generally attack native infants more acutely, and they have to endure them without the nursing which helps European infants towards complete recovery. They are, besides, subject to the disease locally known as *coko* (yaws), and have to undergo the rough and ignorant surgical treatment adopted for *ramusu*, besides, in not a few cases, the strain of premature weaning without an efficient substitute for the mother's milk.

Of all these dangers yaws is the most likely to leave a lasting injury to the constitution of the patient, while it is, as we shall presently show, the most universal of the infantile diseases. More often fatal in its effects, however, is whooping-cough, which, since the year 1884, has become more or less endemic. The attacks of whooping-cough are so severe among Fijian children that it is not at all unlikely that they frequently leave behind them the seeds of pulmonary disease.

Premature weaning (*kali dole*), which we discuss in detail under the head of *Dabe* and Lactation, is resorted to when the mother dies while suckling, or when a second pregnancy supervenes, or when the supply of breast-milk is defective, or when the mother is so deficient in maternal instinct as to neglect her child. In such cases, the child is brought up by hand on spinach made of taro leaves, cocoanut-milk, and occasionally on pieces of yam or taro masticated by the nurse, unless another woman will consent to suckle it in addition to her own. Under these circumstances the child rarely lives, or, if an exceptionally strong constitution preserve it from death, it is so much reduced by the unsuitable diet as to be permanently weakened.

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299. The expression "*ramusu*," referred to in two of the replies, is vaguely used by the natives to denote any obscure injury or serious ailment occurring to a young child. It is the scapegoat for almost any kind of suffering which an infant manifests, the exact nature of which is not plain, or is not the subject of one of the few specific names for children's diseases which the Fijians recognise. Meaning literally "broken," it is mostly applied, the natives explain, to cases of infants or young children who, having been negligently tended, have sustained some fracture, twist, or fall. These accidents are said to be usually the consequence of the mother's absence from the house, working in the garden, or fetching water, or for some other purpose. At such times a careless relative left in charge of a child may allow it to crawl over the edge of the bedplace (*ua ni loga*), or even the doorstep, and become *ramusu* or "sprained." Even if no accident occur and the child chance to become sickly the mother, or some other person left in charge of it not long before, will be blamed for neglecting it.

But when the symptoms fail to indicate any injury, bruise, fracture, or other form of hurt, the case is often enough declared by the "wise woman" called in, to be one of *ramusu*, and in all such cases the sovereign remedy is massage (*bobo*.) Even if the only symptoms be fever, pain, and bowel disturbances, that is no bar to its being considered and called a case of *ramusu*, and the ordinary signs of mechanical injury are in no way essential to the diagnosis. Occasionally, it is true, some herbal decoction may be administered to children in this condition, but the popular and almost universal treatment advocated for them is massage. The general belief is that when a child is *ramusu*, and the massage treatment has been adopted early enough, it will restore the sufferer to health; but that if the nature of the case be concealed, or this mode of treatment neglected or long deferred, death is often the result. There are many professional masseuses, although all "wise women" do not take up this branch of their art.

Some natives believe that the occurrence of *ramusu* in a child with yaws (*coko*) may cause the eruption of the latter to recede, and that such cases can hardly escape a fatal termination. When they do survive they become weakly and "pot-bellied." It seems probable that in this, again, the natives show but little discrimination, and often make *ramusu* a convenient excuse for their negligent or unsuccessful treatment of yaws.

The proportion of children whose death is attributed by the natives to *ramusu* is very considerable: numbers of them are so registered. The want of definition about the term helps to illustrate the difficulty of ascertaining truly from the natives themselves the causes of death in Fijian children.

It is stated by Tubou that *ramusu* is also recognised in Tonga where it is called *faji*, but the term is more restricted to its legitimate meaning—sprained (or broken). There too massage is the usual remedy.

In the Gilbert Islands it is called *moto*, which likewise corresponds with broken, and is also said to be curable by massage when resorted to at an early stage.*

As regards the native treatment of *ramusu* it may be said that for certain forms and degrees of hurt massage may prove very grateful and lulling to the infant, and even curative. But the universality of belief in it as the one sovereign remedy for *ramusu*, and the extremely vague and indefinite nature of the conditions which it is customary to class under this term, cause numerous cases of serious disorders, chiefly of the digestive apparatus, to be neglected or improperly attended to, and to end either in death or in an injury to the constitution that weakens the powers of resisting disease in after life. In cases of actual fracture, also, treatment by massage would be likely to increase the injury. ed/

300. As bearing with much importance on those diseases which tend to permanently injure the health of Fijians must be considered *Tuberculosis*, both as a disease in the individual child and by reason of hereditary taint. All Fijians are very liable to contract tubercle in one shape or another, whether it take the form of so-called

* It is stated by Crawford ("Indian Archipelago") that the word for 'fever' in general use by the Macassar division of the Malay Archipelago is *ramusu*. in/

so-called scrofula or struma, or of true tubercle; and this liability is more especially to be seen in the Windward part of the Group, where there is a strong Tongan strain in the population,—mixed Tongans and Fijians being more liable to be “strumous,” and mixed Fijians and whites still more so. The prevalence of a form of lupus, ulceration of various parts of the body must be taken to be a part of this taint, which otherwise shows itself in actual tubercular disease of various organs, in strumous ulcers, glandular enlargements, and in chronic bone diseases. There is no doubt that in Fijians, as in other races, heredity plays a great part in the propagation of this disease; and, where the disease is so widely spread, the influence on the health of the offspring must be very marked: and it may here be said that possibly in many of the obscure diseases in infants, classed generally among Fijians as *ramusu*, with wasting and very little else to show itself to the untrained eye, there may be a strong tubercular taint, and the children may be dying of tubercular disease of some internal organs—tubercular disease of mesenteric glands, tubercular peritonitis, or tubercular meningitis—any of which might easily be originated or started into life by some apparently trivial cause when there is the seed of the disease in the parents. A visit at any time to the Fijian wards of the Colonial Hospital will show patients, gathered from all parts of the Group, victims of some form of strumous or tubercular disease—as phthisis, as lupus ulceration, as hideous ulcerations; and when these patients return to their homes, and in their turn become parents, the transmitted taint must have a very strong and permanent effect on the health of their progeny.

301. In these days, scarcely a year passes without the appearance of some kind of epidemic sickness, often, it is true, of a mild character, but of a nature utterly unknown to the natives. As soon as a child is attacked by one of these disorders it is dosed with the nostrum used indiscriminately by the wise woman nearest at hand, or is subjected to massage, although such treatment may be in the highest degree improper.

It is improbable that children should pass on to adult life unscathed by these physical experiences, and, although the question is still in the domain of conjecture, it is impossible to dissociate these facts with the lack of stamina described under the head of “Want of Virility.”

302. The remedy for this evil is, of course, better care in health and better nursing in sickness,—reforms which, in our opinion, may be best attained by improved sanitation, by the establishment of a sort of crèche in every village, and by the introduction of a sanitary mission conducted by trained European women,—suggestions discussed under those respective heads.

XVI.—ABUSE OF “YAQONA” AND TOBACCO.

Digest of Replies.

303. Thirteen writers refer to the abuse of tobacco and *yaqona* (*Macro piper Methysticum*—Seemann) as a factor affecting the health of the native population.

Although one writer states that the use of tobacco (coupled with the practice of self-abuse) by men, women, boys, and girls, is the most potent factor affecting the decrease of the population, it is pointed out that, as a rule, both tobacco and *yaqona* are indulged in. The principal charge against tobacco is that pregnant women and nursing-mothers smoke immoderately to the detriment of their infants, and so in many cases cause the death of their children.

The habit is believed by the writers to be very debilitating to the vigour of young women; and by one writer it is thought to be an active agent in impoverishing the physical force of the race.

304. As regards *yaqona*, it is said that natives admit that it is injurious in its effects, and acknowledge that there are many cases in which it has been the primary cause of death. One writer also states that many who have abandoned its use have made marked improvement physically, and he believes that abstention has also resulted in recuperated genital power; but, notwithstanding the inimical effect it is believed to have on the health of the people, its consumption, it is said, is increasing. The only limit to its consumption at the present time is the quantity of

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of the root that may be available. Four correspondents remark on the manner in which young men and women, and even children, indulge in whole nights of drinking, —drunkenness and debauchery, it is said, frequently marking the close of these midnight carousals. By "debauchery" the noise and confusion of these so-called Bacchanalian festivals is probably meant, for it seems probable that debauchery in the proper sense of the word is not compatible with drunkenness on *yaqona*.

It is also believed that these meetings must have an injurious effect on the nursing-mothers and young children who live in the houses where the orgies are celebrated.

It is remarked that the drinking of *yaqona* by women is altogether a growth of recent years. In the past it was restricted to middle-aged and old men, or at furthest to aged women. Now both sexes, old and young, drink it, and there are but few who abstain from its use. Pregnant women indulge generally in both *yaqona* and tobacco to the hurt, it is said, of themselves and their offspring.

It is pointed out that many nursing-mothers drink largely of *yaqona* to increase the lacteal flow, and it is believed that when so used it must have an injurious effect on the infant's welfare, especially when tobacco-smoking is indulged in at the same time. This is not merely the idea of Europeans. There is, it is said, a deep-seated impression in the native mind that *yaqona* is injurious to married women, and at least one correspondent is of opinion that the use of *yaqona* has a debilitating effect on the generative powers—especially in the case of females.

The drinking of *yaqona* by lads, it is said, is one of the causes of hydrocele and kidney complaints now so common in some parts of the Group, but which were unknown in former days when they were not allowed to drink it.

With one exception the correspondents who refer to the use of tobacco and *yaqona* agree in regarding the excessive use of either of them, and especially of both, which is usually the case, as pernicious to the vitality of the native race, and particularly so in the case of married women with infants.

306. As regards the regulation of the use of these narcotics it is pointed out that although, at the suggestion of the Council of Chiefs, a native law was passed some years ago restricting the use of *yaqona*, and forbidding its consumption by males under eighteen, and females under twenty-five, years of age, and by women suckling children, the law is practically a dead-letter and has never been strictly enforced.

By way of remedy it is suggested—

- (1) That the consumption of these narcotics, and especially the use of *yaqona* by married women, ought to be discouraged by every practical means.
- (2) That a law should be passed limiting the use of *yaqona* to adult men, and of tobacco to adult men and women.
- (3) That a tax should be placed upon the *yaqona* root so as to place it beyond the reach of the native commoner.

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306. Both *yaqona* and tobacco are indigenous to Fiji, and are largely cultivated by the natives, and may thus be procured by any of them at the cost of the necessary horticultural labour.

"Yaqona."

Yaqona—the *kava* of Polynesia—appears to have had a place in the ancient ceremonies of most of the branches of the Polynesian peoples.

Its use is also known in the islands of the New Hebrides Group, but it appears to be only recently that it has spread so far west as the Banks Group. In these places its original sacred character has not yet given place to everyday use, and it is not drunk by women. Among the Solomon Islands and other Melanesian Groups it is unknown, its place being occupied by the betel nut and the pepper leaf, the use of which is not confined to males.

In the past, in Fiji, it was used at public ceremonies and in chiefs' houses, but always with form and toasts. It is still used on ceremonial occasions, and from its
use

use in this manner probably no harm except the growth of the habit of drinking arises.

307. It is only in modern times that women have become *yaqona*-drinkers. In the old days, the native witnesses informed us, it was considered a shocking thing for women to drink *yaqona*. Some of the witnesses were under the impression that the drinking of *yaqona* by women was a custom introduced from Tonga, while others stated that Qoliwasawasa, the sister of Cakobau, was the first to drink it in Bau, and was allowed to do so to comfort her for the loss of her husband. Cakobau did not allow others to imitate her as it would have been disrespectful, but when Christianity was embraced the status of the women was raised, and they began to drink *yaqona* as the men had done before.

In the old days, moreover, it was not drunk in every house nor on every night, but only in chiefs' houses by the chief, his retainers and visitors, and on the occasion of special functions.

It is now drunk in the houses of the common people whenever they can obtain a supply of the root. More of the root is now planted than formerly, and at least one chief barter it for native cloth and other property.

Males begin to drink it after they leave school, or say at the age of eighteen, but girls do not drink it at that age, although they may frequently be required to chew the root for others to drink. In reply to our inquiries as to the reason for its use by females we were informed that women drink it as a beverage, as a stimulant, as a laxative, and also as a diuretic. It is largely drunk during pregnancy in the hope that it will give an easy labour and produce a fine child; and it is also much drunk during the suckling period under the idea, or excuse, that it increases the flow of milk when all other means fail. We have also met with a fixed belief that frequent draughts of *yaqona* act as a specific in the early stages of gonorrhœa.

308. The subject of excessive *yaqona*-drinking has been sufficiently discussed from its moral and social aspects to merit no special allusion to it from those points of view in this Report. In judging the opinions submitted by the correspondents we have, however, felt it an essential part of our task to supplement our everyday experience and observation of this habit by some sort of systematic and practical examination into its effects on its votaries. One of our number has therefore made an analysis of a good average sample of *yaqona* and has furnished for our joint consideration, and for the purposes of this Report, the following memorandum respecting the principal results of his investigation:—

309. Memorandum, 19/4/93. Examination of *yaqona*,—the sliced and dried rhizome pounded. Botanical name *Macro piper Methysticum*—(Seemann).

No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.
2 ozs. macerated 3 hours in 6 ozs. of Rectified Spirit.	2 ozs. macerated 1½ hour in 300 c.c. of Ether.	2 ozs. macerated in 10 ozs. of Water.
Strained. The product consisted of rectified spirit containing woody fibre, starch, a pale reddish-yellow colouring matter slightly tintured with chlorophyll, and other matter in solution. Filtered through F. paper woody fibre and starch remained. Filtrate evaporated over a water-bath left a brown viscid oleo-resinous substance which weighed 1·85 grammes.	Treated similarly to No 1. A pale greenish filtrate was obtained, which, evaporated in a draught at 80° F., left a residue of a cerous consistence, gamboge coloured, containing (as revealed by the microscope) crystalloid plates and acicular crystals resembling cholesterin and tyrosin in appearance. Weight 1·92 grammes.	Left twelve hours at a temperature varying between 75° and 84° F. it fermented.

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The tenacious brown resin, with the other substances extracted by alcohol, was found, on experiment, to possess in a marked degree the physiological properties of ordinary *yaqona* as drunk. It represented about 3 per cent. of the weight of dried root from which it was obtained; but the proportion is subject to variation according to the amount of stem included with the rhizome; the latter portion of the plant being much the richer. This resin was found, on being applied to the tongue, to possess an intensely bitter and pungent aromatic taste, which on passing off was, after a minute or so, replaced by the familiar numb and cool sensation known to *yaqona*-drinkers.

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A portion of this as large as a pin's head when placed in the mouth destroyed sensation in the soft palate, tip of the tongue, and parts of the fauces, for fifteen minutes.

An ethereal extract produced on evaporation a gamboge-coloured crystalloid or cerous substance also bitter in taste, but comparatively inert as regards anaesthetic properties. Under the microscope it was seen to contain plates and acicular bundles recalling the appearance of cholesterin and tyrosin.

The starch granules are various. They are present in large quantities, weighing nearly one-third of the whole weight of the sample. Some are spheroidal or egg-shaped, others muller-shaped and truncated like a kettledrum, and a stellate hilum is visible in most of them. All are rounded and without angles or facets. On the whole they resemble the granules of sago or of maize.

A watery infusion of the root, allowed to stand for twenty-four hours at a temperature between 75° and 84° Fahr. had begun to ferment freely at the end of that time and had a yeasty smell.

310. It is probably superfluous to again deny the statement, so often made at second hand, that natives of the Pacific Islands use a fermented beverage called *kava*; as every one who has mixed with these peoples must be aware that it is drunk as soon as made, and that any dregs left in the bowl overnight are unfit for use the next morning, because fermentation has generally by that time begun.

The results of our examination agree in the main with the account of *Piper Methysticum* (*Kawakawa*) given before the Berlin Medical Society, in 1885, by Dr. Lewin, more particularly as to the composition, and toxicity of *yaqona*, though our analysis was, necessarily, not carried out in so much detail as his.

The chief physiological influence of *Macro piper Methysticum* on the human frame is directed towards the motor nerves; but the sensory fibres are affected, and the effect of the drug is also cumulative. The alcoholic extract, when evaporated down to a sticky semi-solid mass, is as potent as cocain, weight for weight, in inducing local anæsthesia. This we verified in our own persons.

We administered 1.75 gramme of the alcoholic extract, the product of nearly two ounces of dried root, to a dog without producing paraplegia, the only marked effect being very profuse salivation and frothing.

311. We also thought it necessary, in order to be able to report with proper confidence upon *yaqona*-drinking, to collect information at first hand from Europeans habitually given to its use, and from natives similarly addicted. And we finally put the matter to further test by ourselves drinking some as ordinarily prepared after pounding. We had all frequently partaken of *yaqona* in the ordinary course of official travelling and of exchanging hospitalities with the natives. The drug was not new to us; and the following observations may be said to sum up the result of our investigations.

We caused ten ounces of dried *yaqona*-root of good quality to be made into a drink in the ordinary way. This quantity was sufficient to fill a bucket three-parts full, and to make a good appearance in a large *tanoa* or *yaqona*-bowl. It afforded us six cocoanut-shellsful apiece, which we drank within a space of three-quarters of an hour. This measure of the beverage would represent as much as the average quantity consumed by a *yaqona*-drinker is one evening.

One of us experienced a trace of giddiness and noticed some slight feeling of numbness and tingling in the calves of the legs.

Its only definite effect upon us was to cause an uneasy, somewhat nauseous, feeling at the epigastrium, which remained for only a few hours in two of our number, but was perceptible by the third during the greater part of the following day. We felt no stimulation, no lulling, no depression. We were not sensible of any diminution of muscular power, even in the lower limbs. We were neither kept awake nor hurried to sleep by the *yaqona*: but slept in quite the usual manner and degree, and arose next morning without any trace of headache or other inconvenience. We did not notice any tremulousness of the hands or knees. Locally, we experienced the familiar numbing of the fauces and soft palate which swallowing strong *yaqona* induces. For a time the quantity of saliva was increased and it became more viscid than normal.

As we had often taken *yaqona* before, but never experienced any ill-effects from its moderate use; and as our trial of it, when made critically, gave no unfavourable

unfavourable results, we conclude that *yagona* consumed in moderate quantities and at reasonably long intervals is almost, if not quite, innocuous.

It is otherwise when indulged in habitually. Confirmed *yagona*-topers are not difficult of recognition. Their bodies become emaciated and their skins, especially the palms and forearms, the shins, and soles of the feet, are dry and covered with scales. They lose their appetite for food, and their aptitude for work either mental or physical, their sleep is disordered, their eyes are bloodshot, and a fixed pain about the pit of the stomach is in such cases usually complained of. Any more prolonged debauch than usual leaves its signs upon the drinker for the next day or two, and his whole demeanour becomes demoralised.

312. The following account of the effects of *yagona*-drinking is communicated by Ratu Joni Mataitini of Rewa, and Laisiasi Cadri of Kadavu, certificated Native Medical Practitioners.

“ I. Habitual Topers.

“(1.) Consequences which ensue when an habitual toper goes without *yagona* for one day: Restlessness of body, inability to sleep, parched feeling, viscosity of the saliva.

“(2.) Additional consequences of abstaining for two or three days: borborygmi, occasionally tenesmus.

“(3.) General effects of excessive drinking:—*Kaui* (desquamation of the cuticle) at first about the hypogastrium only, but eventually all over those parts of the body which it is accustomed to invade, offensive odour of perspiration: smarting of the conjunctivæ, darkening in hue of the nose and cheeks, *lakaca* (fissuring of the skin of the palms and soles), weariness of body, loss of energy, disinclination to do anything, pins and needles of the hands and the soles of the feet.

“ II. Effects of a single debauch on a person not accustomed to drink ‘*yagona*.’

“ Restlessness of body, inability to sleep, headache, singing in the ears, salivation, hyper-uresis, general languor, temporary loss of motor control of the legs, tremor of the hand when grasping anything, disinclination for food even after the more acute symptoms pass off.”

313. At present the consumption of *yagona* is limited only by the supply. Except in the most favoured localities the root requires from two to five years to come to maturity and demands some degree of attention during its growth. A single root of the ordinary size generally suffices only for the beverage of a party on a single occasion, and the dried root is seldom retailed in the country stores at less than 2s. a pound, that quantity being about the minimum required to provide the beverage for an evening *yagona*-party. An excessive or constant use of the root is therefore beyond the power of any but the richer natives. The chiefs probably drink *yagona* once a day throughout the year, and in this they compare favourably with persons of the same rank in Tonga. Commoners, unless they are in attendance on chiefs, pass many days without tasting *yagona*.

There is, no doubt, a greater consumption of *yagona* in these days than in heathen times owing to the facilities for buying the root (frequently imported from other parts of the Pacific) when the green crop is exhausted; and we have been informed that in some parts of the Colony (particularly in Lomaiviti) the people give themselves over to *yagona*-drinking for weeks at a time, during which period they allow their proper work to remain undone. In one particular however there has been a change for the better. Throughout the Eastern districts of the Colony the modern custom of pounding the root between stones has generally taken the place of the old method of chewing the green root, a custom that probably tended to foster a taste for drinking in the young persons selected to prepare the bowl, and which may also through the saliva have communicated the bacilli of disease.

The action of the Wesleyan missionaries in requiring members of their church to eschew *yagona* and tobacco has done much to discourage the use of the beverage, especially among women; and we think that it is among suckling-mothers and young people that the habit of *yagona*-drinking is likely to be most hurtful.

314. That *yagona*-drinking should be capable of becoming a vice at all is perhaps an argument for its prohibition, but seeing that it forms a ceremonial institution in Fiji, and is intimately associated with the despatch of public business in the native councils, we think that it would be impolitic and unnecessary to abolish the custom altogether, although we agree that it should be discouraged so far as young people and women are concerned.

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The cultivation of a right opinion on the subject among the natives is a matter that must be left to the religious bodies at work in the Colony. Its active restraint is we think already duly provided for by Native Regulation No. 4 of 1885, which would be sufficient for its purpose if properly administered. This is therefore one of the matters that we think would be effectually checked by the adoption of our proposals under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws."

Tobacco.

315. The habit of tobacco-smoking was introduced into Fiji by a Manilla ship in the beginning of the present century, and was simultaneously adopted by males and females. Before that time the tobacco leaf was used for the purpose of killing lice and similar vermin, and took its original native name (*mate ni kutu*) from that employment. We were informed by the native witnesses that children of both sexes now begin to use tobacco at a very early age, and although their parents may in some instances punish them for this, the children continue the habit in secret.

The use of tobacco is very universal. All natives smoke, we were told, save those who take the pledge as abstainers, and some of these do. We were assured, however, that the use of tobacco is much less common than it was a generation ago in consequence of the action of the Wesleyan missionaries who have endeavoured to check it.

The replies contain nine allusions to tobacco-smoking, all in terms of condemnation; and all lay particular stress upon its evils when practised by women.

We concur in a general way with these opinions, but we cannot believe that any actual decrease of the population is attributable to the prevalence of the habit among men.

316. The most serious aspect of the question relates to the effect which tobacco-smoking may have upon the milk of suckling-mothers who indulge in the habit.

The native form of cigarette consists of a tobacco leaf twisted inside a piece of dried banana leaf, and of these *suluka*, as they are called, some women will smoke ten a day. Many women have nowadays, however, given up the use of *suluka* in favour of clay pipes. A woman may often be seen at work in the field smoking a short black clay pipe. In these they smoke both native-grown and imported tobacco; but they say that, although the imported tobacco smells well, the smoker does not obtain the same satisfaction—cannot become intoxicated—from it as he can with the native-grown leaf.

Women, we were told, smoke a great deal during pregnancy but generally abstain from it for the first ten days after confinement. One of the witnesses mentioned that when, as a suckling-mother, she smoked, she observed that she had little milk and that her children cried much, whereupon she stopped the use of tobacco until the children were able to crawl. So much consideration is not, however, to be expected from the ordinary Fijian mother, especially as native women appear to be of opinion that smoking by a suckling-mother does not interfere with the quality of her milk.

In view of the importance of the question we wished to ascertain whether the presence of nicotine could be detected by chemical test in the milk of a suckling-mother. To this end we procured, on the 29th of May, a strong healthy Fijian woman with an infant, and gave her half-an-ounce of good native leaf tobacco to smoke. She consumed it all in two hours but refused to smoke any more then. One and a half fluid ounces of her milk were then drawn off and submitted to examination by Dr. Zimmer.

The appliances at command were insufficient to allow of a complete analysis being made, or of the result being checked, but the addition of Platinum Bichloride to the distillate gave a yellow precipitate like that caused by nicotine with this salt.

317. The exposure of infants to an indoor atmosphere, more or less permeated by tobacco-smoke at times, is probably of no consequence. The smoke is so largely diluted with air that the amount inhaled by children can only be trifling. What
smoke

smoke there is may even tend to destroy some of the lower forms of organic impurities by which the interior surface and air of native houses are generally vitiated; and thus be a useful factor in keeping down filth poisons. But such theories are little more than speculative.

318. We do not recommend that the freedom of the men to smoke be interfered with, because we believe that it is a matter which regulates itself according to the degree of toleration each person's constitution is capable of; but we are sure that tobacco should be kept out of the way of children, and that its use by women should be discouraged. We mean by this, that women should be entirely restrained from smoking during lactation; and that it should be forbidden to boys and girls under seventeen years of age. But we fear that a Regulation to this effect, if made, would exist only to be disregarded unless the Government is prepared to appoint European officers as proposed under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws."

We should like to see the chewing of tobacco discontinued altogether: inasmuch as it is damaging to the health of the chewer, and encourages the filthy and insanitary habit of spitting.

We are not satisfied that any moral or social harm results from the use of tobacco. On the contrary, we are disposed to regard smoking as a genial and innocent pastime for adults, except under special circumstances as regards women; and, seeing the fewness of the recreations to which a Fijian can turn when his daylight occupations are over, and the evils to which absolute idleness is prone to lead, we should be sorry to interfere with the liberty of the people in this matter.

319. Our conclusions with regard to the abuse of *yaqona* and tobacco are,—

- (1) That habitual indulgence in *yaqona*-drinking is deleterious and more or less demoralising; but that an excessive or constant use of the root is beyond the power of the people as a whole.
- (2) That in some places the people occasionally give themselves over to bouts of *yaqona*-drinking.
- (3) That the habit of *yaqona*-drinking is likely to be most hurtful to mothers with infants.
- (4) That, although generally indulged in, the habit of tobacco-smoking is probably hurtful only to young children and suckling-mothers with their infants, and that owing to the action of the Wesleyan Mission the use of both *yaqona* and tobacco by women is diminishing.

As remedies we would propose,—

- (1) That Regulation No. 4 of 1885 ("Concerning *Yaqona*") should be enforced.
- (2) That a Regulation should be enacted forbidding the use of tobacco by boys and girls and by women who are suckling children.
- (3) That these Regulations could be best rendered effective by the appointment of the European officers proposed under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws."

XVII.—LACK OF DISCIPLINE.

Digest of Replies.

320. It is pointed out by the correspondents that Fijians do not seek to train their children but allow them unlimited freedom, and that consequently such a thing as discipline among Fijian children does not exist except in a few of the schools. This lack of discipline naturally produces a precocity, which is fostered by the immoral conversation of their elders to which the children listen unchecked night after night. This condition of things, it is said, results in the total depravity of the juvenile population, a circumstance to which at least two correspondents having an intimate knowledge of native manners mainly attribute the great infant mortality.

By those unacquainted with native character it might be wondered at that natives do not make something more than mere hortatory attempts to discipline their

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their children; but when it is remembered that a child that has been beaten by a parent would probably revenge himself by burning down his father's house, and with it the whole village, or by running away to his relations who would be sure to sympathise with him, or that he could otherwise find means to retaliate (a feeling to which the parent himself was probably no stranger in his youth) it will be understood why natives fear to use the rod. The children are thus never broken into harness, and they grow up into vain and selfish young women and ignorant and listless men.

321. The remedy suggested for the lack of discipline is a stricter system of education. One writer proposes that all native teachers should be empowered to inflict corporal punishment,—a penalty lately provided for by Native Regulation No. 4 of 1892 in the case of male children guilty of offences against the law. Two correspondents speak of the present native schools as being inadequate in the matter of discipline, and urge that there should be enforced daily attendance, enforced obedience, and regularity in work, sleep, and meals, while moral training should be provided in the form of good reading-matter, religious teaching, and healthy games. It is thought by one writer that this can only be effected by the appointment of a Government Inspector of Schools.

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322. Fijian children know nothing of home discipline, for their parents are incapable of adhering to any system of control. At one moment they will correct a child for some act which at another it is allowed to do unchecked. The natives themselves in accounting for their slackness say that the influence of parents is daily growing less because they have resigned their authority to the teacher, and no longer regard themselves as primarily responsible for the training of their children. But even if the parents were inclined to use their authority it is to be doubted whether they, who have never themselves been subjected to discipline, would use it in the right direction. They might be induced to check actual lawlessness and insubordination but they are incapable of inculcating habits of industry and self-restraint. A Fijian lacks the love for his children which is exhibited by an Indian coolie or a Line Islander. He probably cares for them in a casual way, but seldom takes the trouble to amuse, or tend, or instruct them.

323. As the home life of the children cannot thus be looked to as a means of improvement, endeavour should be made to reach them through the medium of the schools. The entire system of native education, however, is sustained and discharged by the Missions, without any assistance from public funds that would entitle the Government to interfere with them. The education of the natives could not be conducted except by the Missions, who do the work admirably with the material available; but as long as the villages continue to be so numerous and small the difficulty of finding efficient native teachers will always be an obstacle in the way of improvement in the standard of education and discipline.

There are, however, as might be expected, some drawbacks in the existing educational system. In some parts of the Colony, we are informed, school is held only once or twice a week—a circumstance that can neither promote education nor discipline.

Most of the schools are of the class known as "Mixed Schools," being attended by boys and girls and young men and young women. We think that, wherever possible, the separation of the sexes in school should be attempted. The association of young men and women in school may be productive of no tangible harm, but does not tend to improve discipline.

There should be no necessity, in the great majority of cases, for youths to attend school to such a late age as is now the case. They probably learn little in the later years of their attendance (save in exceptional cases), and the comparative idleness unfits them for work. They should be subject to communal work after they reach the age of fourteen, provision being made for instances of exceptional capacity.

The practising of school *meke*s late at night leads to no good, and should be discouraged.

While

While the Government is unable to contribute to the maintenance of the native schools the difficulties encountered by the Missions would be materially lessened by the proposed concentration of villages. In the meantime the executive officers of each province should be aroused to the fact that the attendance of children is not sufficient to satisfy the provisions of the law, and they should be induced to take a stronger personal interest in the progress of the children and the efficiency of the schools than they now manifest. But little, however, is to be expected from the older officials who have never themselves attended school. We think it desirable that in course of time inspectors should be appointed to examine all schools periodically, and that a small grant should be made, with a view of promoting efficiency in tuition and discipline, to such schools as are declared to fulfil the required conditions,—certificates being awarded to those scholars who attain a certain degree of proficiency.

324. An admirable mental discipline might be found in the acquisition of the English language. It is unfortunate that, up to the present time, natives who have acquired a knowledge of English (we do not, however, attach any importance to a mere colloquial knowledge of the language) have not, as a rule, commended themselves by their conduct,—a circumstance for which association with Europeans is, perhaps, to some extent responsible,—but we think that better results might be expected as the number of educated natives increases. A knowledge of English would open up a literature which would undoubtedly have a civilising effect.

At present, however, we do not see that English could be taught except to a selected number of pupils in the Missionary Training Institutes and in any higher schools that may be established; but we think that the promotion of English instruction should be kept in view. We understand that an English school was at one time attached to one of the Mission Training Institutes, but had to be given up on account of the difficulty experienced in procuring the regular attendance of the pupils. Many of the pupils, we are informed, made good progress in their English studies, but their parents had not sufficient influence over them to keep them at school or to return them to it when they ran away—an incident of frequent occurrence. This difficulty, however, would probably be more easily got over in a Government school than in a Mission institute. In any case it is a difficulty that has to be conquered, and we think that a beginning should be made without loss of time.

325. Two suggestions of the correspondents on this subject also deserve the attention of the Government. A series of small books of amusement such as “Æsop’s Fables” and “Historical Tales,” and of instruction in sanitary matters and the laws of health, prepared in such a way as to be entertaining, should be issued and distributed at the smallest possible price.

326. The encouragement of games is a remedy proposed,—the native game of *veitiga* being especially mentioned. It is unfortunately dangerous in Fiji to encourage contests of skill between different villages. In the old days matches of *veitiga* frequently ended in a fight between the parties; and a case of a riot which occurred this year in Nadroga shows that the game could not yet be reintroduced and encouraged with safety.

Attempts to introduce English athletic sports on two occasions very nearly led to bloodshed, and even as late as the *Bose Vakaturaga* last year the “Tug-of-war” had to be abandoned for fear of a riot. But these remains of the old tribal hostility will in time wear off, and, in the meantime, the chiefs might be invited to co-operate in encouraging the playing of games within the limits of each village. The place formerly occupied in Tonga and Samoa by the excitement of war is now to some extent filled by emulation in cricket, but the Fijians do not exhibit that love for the game which the Tongans and Samoans do.

327. The constabulary, the police force, the prison, and the educational training institutions, will do as much as can be done to instil an idea of discipline into the young men of the present generation. But we agree with one of the correspondents in thinking that it will take years of education and increased civilisation to affect the race.

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328. Under this head therefore our conclusions are,—

- (1) That the home life of the natives is not calculated to promote discipline, and that in this respect the home life cannot be altered.
- (2) That the majority of the schools are but little better fitted to that end; but the school life must be looked to as a means of improving the discipline of the rising generation.
- (3) That but little can be done with the present generation beyond what is being done by constabulary discipline, prison discipline, and the order seen at training institutes, and that general improvement in discipline will be gradual.

The remedies which might be applied to further the end in view are,—

- (1) Concentration of towns which will lead to an improvement in the efficiency of the schools, and permit of the substitution of separate schools for boys and girls in place of the existing “mixed” schools.
- (2) Enlisting the interest of Provincial officers in the attendance of children and the efficiency of schools.
- (3) Promotion of instruction in the English language as a mental discipline and as a means of opening up a literature to the natives.
- (4) The printing and issue of small books of amusement (such as “Historical Tales,” &c.) and instruction in sanitary matters and the laws of health.
- (5) Encouragement of games,—if found practicable.
- (6) Ultimately—the inspection and State aid of schools.

TREATMENT
OF SICK
PERSONS.XVIII.—TREATMENT OF SICK PERSONS. ~~XXXIV~~

329. This subject will be dealt with under Cause No. ~~XXXVIII~~, “Native Medical Treatment and Nursing,” with which it may more conveniently be considered.

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XIX.—IRREGULARITY OF LIVING.

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330. Nine writers allude to the irregularity in the natives' way of living as an active cause of the decrease of the race. Two of these lay stress upon the custom of holding nocturnal *mekes* or dances, which are said to cause excessive feasting, over-fatigue, irregularity in sleep, and exposure to chill, both as regards the performers and the onlookers. Others point to the exposure to inclement weather and the irregularity in eating which travellers to *solevu* are obliged to undergo,—forms of irregularity which are said to have increased during late years. Two writers state that native labourers who are obliged to work, eat, and sleep at the proper times, show a lower death-rate and a higher condition of physical wellbeing than the ordinary Fijian. It is pointed out that Fijians living in their own towns seldom have a warm breakfast before going to work.

No suggestion is made indicating the best means of cultivating regularity except by the writer of Paper No. 12 (2), who proposes a reorganisation of the native system on feudal lines. One writer thinks that night *mekes* should be prohibited by Regulation, but the majority seem to believe that improvement can only be the result of education.

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331. Fixed routine in daily life seems to be a growth of civilisation. It is unknown to primitive man, all of whose functions are guided by the impulse of the moment. The Fijian eats when hungry, or when the sight of cooked food whets his appetite; he bathes when he would cool his body; he sleeps when darkness makes employment impossible and when he is otherwise disinclined to work; but regular hours for all these functions are unknown to him. His nearest approach to regularity is his observance of the season for yam planting, but this is because tradition has taught him that if he fails to plant his yams when the

drala

drala tree is in flower he will lack food in the ensuing year. He is improperly fed, not because food is scarce, but because he is incapable of the routine of regular meals, or of sustained moderation. In times of plenty his general diet is not improved, because he wastes his surplus in the unnecessary prodigality of feasting: in time of scarcity he suffers because he will not husband his slender resources. System of all kinds is peculiarly irksome to him. The writer of Paper No. 22 gives a characteristic illustration of this peculiarity in a woman who preferred letting her child die to taking the trouble of walking half-a-furlong every day to fetch milk for it. At least two other instances exactly parallel to this have come under the personal observation of one of the Commissioners. The Fijian has shown himself unfit to keep cattle for he would rather let his beasts die of thirst than be bound by the necessity of giving them water at stated intervals. He cannot use dairy-produce because he would fail to milk his cows regularly and to cleanse the utensils in which the milk is contained. His pigs on the other hand thrive because they require neither feeding nor tending. Fishing he loves because it is an ever-varying succession of excitements. But even his boat, the possession in which he takes the greatest pride, is allowed to decay almost past repair before he will think of refitting it, although he is well aware that a regular supply of paint and ship-chandlery would have made much of the expense unnecessary. This mental sluggishness which defers till the morrow all that does not appeal to the impulse of to-day affects all his surroundings, making his house squalid, his diet irregular, and his village insanitary.

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332. While there is no doubt that nocturnal *meke* (songs and dances) are responsible for not a few of the deaths that proceed from diseases of the lungs and bowels, we do not think that preventive legislation would result in any good commensurate with the irritation that such a measure would produce; for the *meke* is one of the few outlets for innocent amusement and excitement left to relieve the monotony with which enforced peace has imbued the life of the Fijians. To effect reform in this respect the natives must be taught that chills and damp are dangerous to health, an idea which they are as yet unable to grasp. But we think that the practising of *meke* late at night by school-children should be discouraged.

333. We agree with the correspondents who think that the physical stamina of the Fijians suffers from idleness and from irregularity in eating and sleeping. A return furnished to us by the Superintendent of Prisons shows that 118 Fijian male prisoners who were serving short sentences of hard labour in Suva Gaol during the year 1892 gained an aggregate weight of 153½ lbs., or an average of 1·3 lbs. per man. There were, moreover, no deaths among them and very little sickness. A marked improvement is noticeable in the physical appearance of native prisoners after some months of work in gaol, and in native labourers returning from work on the plantations of Europeans, and this improvement can only be attributed to the enforced regularity of their lives while in gaol or at work on the plantations.

334. Yet while we fully recognise that more work and more regular diet would have a beneficial effect upon the Fijians we are not prepared to recommend that reform in this respect be attempted by legislation. The Government already, through the medium of the Native Taxation System, induces the natives to perform labour which yields an annual sum of nearly £30,000, one-third of which is returned to them to spend as they please. To compel them to do more might produce a sense of injustice that would defeat its own object. The surest inducement to work is to be found in increased wants that can only be satisfied by the acquisition of money. That there is a sure, if slow, advance in this respect may be gathered from the steady increase in the number of men who annually seek work on plantations, and in the rapid advance shown in the returns of produce sold in the Native Market in Suva. Regularity in living will not necessarily follow the acquisition and consumption of articles of European manufacture, but increasing prosperity will afford the Fijians the means of conforming to the laws of healthy living.

In the meantime they should receive instruction in those laws by the publication of treatises on health and sanitary matters, which would be emphasised by such an agency as the Ladies' Sanitary Mission.

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But we think that the remedy most to be relied on to combat the irregularity of native life is a strict and searching supervision as advocated in this Report under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws," which would be materially assisted by the concentration of villages if it were found possible to adopt the recommendations made under the head of "Decentralisation."

OBSTACLES
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XX.—OBSTACLES TO MARRIAGE.

Digest of Replies.

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335. Nineteen correspondents touch on the subject of obstacles to marriage which prevail among the Fijians of the present day.

One correspondent remarks that people marry younger now than they did formerly, that the parties are not fully developed at marriage, and that consequently their offspring is weakly; and two correspondents from Vanualevu seek to discourage the marriage of very young girls as being fraught with evil. The general opinion, however, is in favour of early and free marriages; and to the rarity of such marriages the decrease of the population is partly ascribed.

Young men, it is said, wait too long before marrying. Early marriage is natural and suitable for natives of the Tropics, and young people should establish themselves and found families while they are from twenty to twenty-five years of age. But a host of obstacles are cited which tend to prevent not only the marriage of young people in particular, but marriage in general. Chief among these is the idiosyncrasy, jealousy, or disaffection of parents and relatives. This may arise from prejudice against the proposed husband or wife, or against his family or village. The fact that it has not been customary in the past for the people of the respective villages or *mataqali* to intermarry is often considered an insuperable bar to a union; or the parents may be unwilling to relinquish the services of the young man or woman, and consequently put obstacles in the way of a projected marriage. It is remarked that the power of the girl's parents over her, and of the chief and *mataqali* over the women of the tribe, is too great and is also abused. One writer cites the complaint of a young mother who could get no help to nurse her child because her relatives had objected to her marriage. At present, after the girl has given her consent, nearly all the members of both families have to assent, as well as the *Buli* and *mataqali*.

Marriages are also delayed and prevented by reason of the parties having no house built, or because the *Buli* (the chief of the district) has withheld his sanction. Another cause cited as one of the things that prevent early marriages is the constant and intimate association on equal terms of the young men and young women in the village schools,—girls as a rule attending school until they have exceeded a marriageable age.

336. It is further stated that in many cases girls are dealt with as chattels to be disposed of to the highest bidder. In such cases, unless the intending husband has accumulated a sufficient quantity of property, his suit may be rejected. Sometimes an engagement may last for years, and the marriage may not take place after all, because the man has been unable to acquire the property necessary for obtaining the girl he desires. Not only is this so, but, even after marriage has taken place, the parents of the girl withhold her from her husband until he is able to satisfy their avidity.

One writer mentions that he has known the *kanavata* (before which the marriage is not consummated) to be postponed for two years owing to the husband's lack of means to provide the property required for presentation on the occasion. In other cases this custom may lead to the girl's marriage to some person selected for her by her parents and relatives to whom he has commended himself. Young women, it is said, are threatened and cajoled into marrying persons whom they at first dislike and after marriage hate. It is further believed that in many cases the children of such unions are neglected by their mother, who regards them as the offspring of her relatives' desires, and refuses to be concerned about them. On the other hand, it is mentioned that in some of the happiest and most successful marriages

marriages in the old days the bride had to be carried to her husband's house by force. It is suspected, however, that much of this coercion arose from affectation on the part of the bride.

Another effect of forced marriages is said to be the failure of the couple to cohabit, which often leads to the women indulging in illicit connection with other men, and to consequent attempts to procure abortion.

337. It is also mentioned that young men complain that they are unable to effect marriage. This inability arises partly from the difficulties above set forth and partly from others which are of an equally exigent nature,—the main one being that the young women wish to avoid marriage as long as possible. Fijian women are quite aware that, when they enter the state of wedlock, they leave most of the pleasures of life behind, and must look forward to a life of hard work. In these days girls are allowed such complete license that, if they do not fall into evil courses they continue to lead a frivolous existence which unfits them for, and renders them averse to, the restraints of lawful marriage. There are also numbers of cases in which, after a time, women separate from their husbands and never live with them again. The women thus set free are notoriously incontinent but do not bear children.

One correspondent, who takes a different view of the question, states that the men are disinclined to marry, and that this has had the effect of reducing the status of woman as a unit in the *matagali*, and that she is consequently looked upon more as a necessary evil than as a means of reproducing the race. Another points out that in Tubou (Lakeba) 30 per cent. of the lads are troubled with hydrocele, which would be a great hindrance to matrimony.

338. There is one point on which the correspondents who deal with this phase of the subject are almost unanimous, viz,—that the obstacles put in the way of marriages, when successful, all tend to promote illicit intercourse between the parties, which generally results in the use of medicines and other means to counteract the effect of these secret connections. This immorality again reacts on the woman, and becomes in itself an obstacle in the way of her marriage and of her becoming a mother. It is therefore suggested that every encouragement should be given to early marriages, if only as a preventive of vice.

339. The suggestions made by way of remedy may be briefly summarised as follows:—

- (1) That everything should be done to remove technical and punctilious difficulties in the way of marriages, so that not even parents should be able to prevent the marriage of persons over sixteen years of age; that the number of forms to be gone through, and the number of family and official consents to be obtained, be swept away so that marriage shall be simplified; and that everything be done to favour the intermarriage of natives of different provinces instead of, as at present, ingenuity being exercised to prevent them.
- (2) That native officials be instructed to encourage marriages.
- (3) That when marriages are opposed on trivial grounds the parties should have a right of appeal to the *Buli*.
- (4) That in cases of fornication the parties should be allowed to marry if so minded, and that thereupon proceedings against them should be stayed.
- (5) That the provision of property by the husband in connection with his engagement, and the subsequent *kanavata* be abolished by reviving the Regulation concerning "*Duguci ni Yalewa*."
- (6) That forced marriages—generally the marriage of young women to old men—should be disallowed.
- (7) That provision be made to prevent girls being shut up in Roman Catholic seminaries and refused in marriage to Protestants, as is at present the practice in some places.
- (8) That a Regulation be enacted providing a penalty for persons harbouring married women who have deserted their husbands. This

is considered more particularly necessary because, in the majority of cases, these women have been enticed from their husband's home by their friends and relations.

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340. Making due allowance for local variations, the ancient marriage customs of persons of middle rank may be described as follows:—

The parents of a male, having ascertained that their overtures would be acceptable, sent betrothal gifts (*ai duguci*) to the parents of the girl whom they desired for a daughter-in-law. When the children reached adolescence the girl was taken to her bridegroom's house, and a quantity of property, known as the *solevu* or *yau ni kumu*, was ceremoniously presented to her people, who, in their turn, provided a marriage feast. If the bridegroom were of mature age he presented his own betrothal gifts; if he were no older than his bride the marriage was usually arranged by his parents, but in neither case were the inclinations of the girl consulted. She was usually betrothed, as we have shown elsewhere, to her first cousin, or at least to a member of her mother's clan.

Shortly after Cession (in September, 1875) Governor Sir Arthur Gordon consulted the Great Council of Chiefs regarding the form of marriage laws in their opinion most suitable to the natives. They recommended that the presentation of betrothal gifts (*duguci*) should be prohibited on the ground that it tended to infant betrothals and the forcing together of ill-assorted couples who separated immediately without consummating the marriage; that girls should be free to marry whom they pleased after the age of sixteen; that the license should be granted by a Native Magistrate after due inquiry; and that the ceremony should be performed either by a Minister of Religion or by a Stipendiary Magistrate. These recommendations were embodied in Regulation No. 12 of 1877, which has since been amended in details by Regulations Nos. 6 of 1880, 3 of 1883, and 2 of 1892. The only requirements of these Regulations that can be held to delay marriages are,—(1) the interval of one month between the application for and the issue of the license, during which period the Native Magistrate makes inquiries respecting the applicants, and (2) the very sensible requirement that the man shall be provided with a house of his own before marrying.

341. A great obstacle to many projected marriages is the difficulty of providing marriage gifts (*yau ni kumu*) suitable to the dignity of the girl's relations. These used to consist solely of mats, white *masi*, *gatu*, salt, or other native product, but it has lately become the custom to add European articles,—knives, calico, &c.,—for which money has first to be earned. In most cases the necessary property is not forthcoming at the time the marriage is arranged, but so apprehensive is the bridegroom lest his betrothed should change her mind that the marriage ceremony is performed long before (from a native point of view) the marriage can with propriety be consummated. During an interval varying from a few months to two years the bride lives with her parents, and the bridegroom accumulates the property required to redeem her; but the interval is unfortunately long enough in many cases for one or other of the pair to commit adultery. The evidence in a certain proportion of the native suits for divorce shows that the marriage has never been consummated owing to the practice just described, which seems to be more common on the north-east coast of Vitilevu than elsewhere.

This evil was recognised in 1892, and Regulation No. 2 of that year prohibited betrothal gifts (*duguci ni yalewa*), which had been made legal by a previous enactment, and provided a penalty for persons who kept married couples apart on the ground of the marriage gifts not having been presented. The Legislative Council also approved of a Regulation providing a penalty for enticing married women from their husbands. This, we think, is all that can be done by legislation to break down the difficulties encountered by a poor man in getting married,—difficulties that exist in more civilised communities.

342. In respect of the obstacles so often placed in the way of projected marriages by some disaffected member of the girl's *mataqali*, we must admit that, while

while section 12 of Regulation No. 12 of 1877 distinctly declares that every girl over sixteen years of age shall be "free to marry whom she pleases," this legal freedom is much curtailed by section 1 of Regulation No. 3 of 1883, which requires the Native Magistrate to invite "reasonable objections" to the marriage from the *mataqali* of either of the applicants, and requires the head of the *mataqali* to "see that the customs and ceremonies are duly performed." From the point of view of the older natives there are insuperable objections to intermarriage with a strange clan, for the ancestral spirit would naturally be averse to inhabit a body descended from, perhaps, a former enemy. A man who wishes to marry a girl of a clan with which his own people have not regularly intermarried, or who may fail in conciliating some member of her tribe, generally finds that her friends vehemently oppose the marriage, and induce the Native Magistrate to withhold the license. He has, it is true, an appeal to the *Roko Tui*, but he seldom has the force of character to exercise this right in the face of opposition, and the engagement is either broken off or the pair come together secretly without legal sanction.

A proposal to alter the law so as to deprive the relatives of persons intending to marry of all power of intervention was submitted to the Council of Chiefs in 1892, but the higher chiefs, thinking probably of their own feelings if their daughters were to make a mesalliance, looked coldly on it. We think, however, that the time has come for so amending the law. Legislation, it is true, will not sweep away the natural objections to the marriage of persons in different ranks of life—they are common to an even greater degree in civilised countries—but we think that they should not be given legal sanction. So far from its being desirable that the chief of the *mataqali* should "see that the customs and ceremonies are duly performed" (Regulation No. 3 of 1883), we think that the custom of requiring marriage gifts should be gradually broken down. We do not, however, think that the Regulation can well be simplified in other directions without permitting abuses more injurious than the trifling formalities now required by law. Much can be done to encourage early marriages by the native chiefs; and we think that their obligations in this respect should be kept before them.

XXI.—PENAL LAWS AGAINST FORNICATION.

Digest of Replies.

343. Eleven writers condemn the punishment of fornication by legal penalties upon the ground that the fear of punishment is a direct incentive to procure abortion in the case of unmarried women who have become pregnant. Two correspondents further indicate that the disabilities which offenders against sexual morality suffer in the Church cause many young women to have recourse to illegal means to conceal their condition. In support of this statement attention is directed to the contrast between Strong's and Ascension Islands in the Caroline Group. The population of the former, it is alleged, under the strict moral code of the missionaries has been reduced in thirty-five years from 5,000 to 200, while the people of the latter, left to follow their own exceedingly lax morality, have suffered no decrease in numbers.

344. Opinions differ regarding the reforms to be adopted. The various suggestions may be summarised as follows:—

- (1) That the penalty for fornication be abolished,—punishments being reserved for rape and first seduction only.
- (2) That fornication be no longer punishable,—but that rape and carnal knowledge of girls under fourteen be visited with the severest penalties.
- (3) That the only penalty inflicted for fornication be monetary compensation to the friends of the woman.
- (4) That the penalty be confined to the male offender only.
- (5) That the parties be offered the option of marriage which, if they accept, should exempt them from punishment, or that at least they be allowed to wed if they really feel disposed to do so.
- (6) That sexual immorality be neither punished by law nor inveighed against in the pulpit, but that it be checked by moral persuasion.

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On the side of more stringent penal law there are the following suggestions,—

- (1) That imprisonment be made a real punishment and disgrace.
- (2) That the present laws be more generally applied.
- (3) That married women guilty of adultery be flogged with the cat-o'-nine-tails, or be at least threatened with that punishment.

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345. Only two writers have recommended the abolition of the penalty for adultery. The penalty for a male offender is imprisonment with hard labour for not more than twelve nor less than three months: a female cannot be imprisoned, but may be set a task of native manufacture to be completed in her own house. Only the injured husband or wife can appear as prosecutor—unless the European Stipendiary Magistrate order a prosecution, a course seldom if ever resorted to. There is a further Regulation (No. 2 of 1882) which provides a penalty of not more than six months' imprisonment for the attempt to seduce a married woman. By Fijian custom, as in most ancient codes, adultery was regarded as a grave criminal offence,—as one of the most serious injuries one man can inflict upon another; or, at the lowest estimate, as a superior kind of robbery or malicious injury of property. In India it is treated as a criminal offence. It is only in modern times that in Europe adultery, with somewhat questionable logic, has been regarded as an injury to be solaced by a sum of money recoverable by civil process. Without a penalty for adultery, as an outlet for the resentment of the injured persons we feel sure that, in Fiji, personal violence would be resorted to. In the majority of prosecutions for this offence, evidence of confession by one of the guilty parties, or the statement of eye-witnesses whose suspicions have led them to keep watch, is adduced. For obvious reasons the pregnancy of the female offender is not relied upon to secure a conviction; and married women who are unfaithful to their husbands are seldom tempted to conceal their pregnancy from fear of exposure or of punishment, since their condition can be otherwise accounted for. Since, therefore, we do not believe that the practice of abortion is increased by the penalty for adultery, we do not recommend any change in a law founded, in our opinion, in both justice and policy.

346. The question of the continuance of the penal laws against fornication deserves careful consideration. The Native Regulation in question (No. 11 of 1877, sections 4, 5, and 6) was enacted upon the recommendation of the *Bose Vakaturaga* or Great Councils of Chiefs with the view, probably, not so much of checking sexual immorality as of providing the friends of a girl who has been seduced with a lawful outlet for their resentment, which in former times would have been vented in violence. The Regulation is as follows:—

“Any person who upon the complaint of the parents or guardians of a girl is proved guilty of fornication with her shall be imprisoned for three months with hard labour. The girl may be sentenced to plait mats, or make *malo*, fishing nets, or pottery, at her own home, during three months, as the Court may direct. In every case where, under the Regulation, a prosecution may be entered on the complaint of a parent or guardian it shall be lawful, on the failure of the parent or guardian so to do, for an European Stipendiary Magistrate, if he thinks fit, to institute such prosecution.”

As the last quoted clause is seldom, if ever, resorted to, prosecutions are practically limited to cases in which the parents or guardians of a girl feel themselves aggrieved. It is moreover noticeable that in a majority of cases information is not laid until the girl is pregnant. It would seem as if the injury lay not so much in the seduction, as in the fact that a single woman who has given birth to a child is damaged matrimonially, and cannot command the same value in marriage gifts to the parents as when her unchastity was not positively proved.

The proportion of prosecutions for fornication during the year 1892 may be gathered from the following table:—

Total number of cases tried in District Court, 1892, in eight provinces only.	Number of prosecutions for fornication.	Proportion per cent of total cases tried.	Number of convictions for fornication.
1,979	84	4·2	63

We

We have no reliable return of the District Court cases ten years ago, but we know that there has been a steady decline in the number of prosecutions for fornication. One reason for this may be found in the fact that the Native Magistrates of to-day adhere more closely to the law than their less educated predecessors, and refuse to entertain any case that occurred more than six months before the information was laid. In some cases girls succeed in concealing their condition until after this limitation has elapsed: in others the offence has been condoned until a desire for vengeance for some other slight or injury prompts the raking up of the old charge. But, apart from these causes, there is undoubtedly a growing inclination to condone this offence. This may be a reaction from the rigour with which the missionaries have always treated sexual vice, or it may be owing to declining esteem for the chastity of women.

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The Regulation is moreover often abused. When it is remembered that it is almost impossible to find an unmarried Fijian of twenty years of age who has not had a sexual intrigue, and that half of the girls have lost their virginity before marriage, it will be seen that the prosecutions form but a small proportion of the cases of fornication that come to light. In many instances the old delinquencies of a man who has made himself obnoxious to his chief or fellow-townsmen are ferreted out,—they are never difficult to discover,—and pressure is brought to bear upon the parents of the girl to induce them to prosecute. Cases have come under our notice in which women of loose morality have been set on to seduce unpopular men in the certainty that they cannot withstand such temptation, and with the intention of procuring their prosecution. This is indeed the plan usually adopted to ensure a man's ruin when all other schemes have failed. There are also instances of native teachers, actuated perhaps by mistaken zeal, placing sick women under inquisition with the promise that they will recover if they confess their lapses from chastity, and thus affording the women's parents the evidence required for prosecuting their paramours. The same inquisition is practised by the old women upon any young girl who has fainted or has been taken suddenly ill.

347. But none of these defects in the application of the law should in themselves be sufficient to condemn it without evidence that it is partly instrumental in causing the decrease of population. The main charge against it is that while it is useless as a deterrent to immorality it forms a powerful inducement towards the procuring of abortion. It was upon this charge that it was formally arraigned by a section of the chiefs at the *Bose Vakaturaga* held in June, 1892. Among other recommendations made for staying the decrease was the following, viz.:—"That the law regarding fornication be so amended as to provide punishment only for the first seduction of girls, and for adultery." It is right, however, to say that this resolution was passed by the *Roko Tui* alone—some of whom afterwards informed the Assistant Native Commissioner that they voted against their conviction—and that it was rejected almost unanimously by the Lower House including all the Native Magistrates,—officers who have had more experience of the practical working of the Regulation than any other class in the Colony,—upon the ground that the disgrace of disclosure rather than the fear of punishment occasioned the practice of abortion, and that the repeal of the penalty would drive the parents and friends of a seduced girl to avenge the injury by taking the law into their own hands.

There is, we think, some truth in this conclusion. Long before a girl is brought to court, her frailty has been made public. If she be a member of the Wesleyan Church (*curusiga*) she has been arraigned before an ecclesiastical tribunal and has forfeited her claims to membership. Her less frail or more adroit fellow-townswomen have not scrupled to wound her with their disdain. Conviction by the District Court can add nothing to such social disgrace as she has been made to suffer, and the punishment—the plaiting of mats in her own house—can have no terrors for her. So long as proved unchastity continues to carry with it any measure of social disability—and we are far from wishing it otherwise—so long will there be an inclination to conceal the result of incontinence by criminal practices.

348. Yet to avoid all shadow of inducement to the practice of abortion, we recommend a modification in the law. It would be unwise to deprive the parents of

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a girl of all legal remedy against her seducer. The imposition of a money penalty would enable the chiefs to go free while the poorer natives would go to gaol in default of payment.

We therefore recommend,—That the penalty for a male convicted of fornication be altered to “any term not exceeding three months;” that the female be exempted from prosecution, but be not allowed to appear as a witness against her paramour; that the male be absolved from punishment upon marriage with the female; and that a clause be inserted in the body of the Regulation cautioning the Native Magistrates, in sentencing offenders, to take into consideration the previous character of the woman with whom the accused committed the offence.

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XXII.—ABORTION, FETICIDE, AND PREVENTION OF CONCEPTION.

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349. There is a great agreement of testimony to the effect that abortion is in common practice among Fijian women. Twenty-two writers instance the prevalence of this crime as one of the principal causes of the decrease of the natives. If the evidence of the early missionaries in their indictment of the system of Polygamy is to be accepted, the practice is by no means new. The Rev. Walter Lawry, in 1847, wrote,—

“All the missionaries say that infanticide is very prevalent here, and that the children are mostly destroyed before they are born by means most startling and revolting, but that many others are murdered after they come forth * * * The history of infanticide here is too revolting to be written; it may be enough to say that it is very general and has not merely become an abominable custom, but is reduced to a system.”

One writer mentions that to prevent the birth of a *vasu*, with claims upon his mother's tribe, professional procurers of abortion were sent in the train of every lady of rank who married the chief of another tribe, with instructions to procure the miscarriage of her mistress.

Another writer, contrasting the past with the present, says that the use of drugs to procure abortion is more frequently resorted to in these days than formerly; because, of old, these medicines were only known to a few of the old people and by them kept secret, whereas nowadays they are almost universally known and almost universally used.

The motives assigned for the practice are,—

- (1) Dislike of the burden of rearing children.
- (2) Fear of losing the attractiveness of youth after child-birth.
- (3) Dislike of the long period of separation of husband and wife enjoined by Fijian custom after child-birth.
- (4) Dread of the pains of child-birth.
- (5) Disinclination to bear children to a husband with whom the mother has quarrelled.
- (6) Fear of punishment for fornication, or of condemnation by the Church, on the part of unmarried women who have become pregnant.

Of the above motives the last is probably the most common, though we incline to think that it is the dread of social disgrace—a survival of the stern social code that existed before the introduction of Christianity—rather than the fear of punishment which constitutes the usual motive for the act.

350. Several writers, while stating their belief that abortion is extensively practised, do not admit that it has any serious influence upon the decrease of the population. One points out that the high birth-rate is sufficient to prove this; another calls the practice of drinking herbal decoctions a “small factor;” and a third, after a residence of nearly twenty-five years among the natives, has been unable to learn that abortion was ever practised to an extent that would have any material effect on the increase or decrease of the race. On the other hand a large majority declare that the practice is not only very common, but also that it has a marked effect in increasing infant mortality by injuring, without killing, the fœtus, and by rendering the mother incapable of again bearing vigorous offspring. The principal

principal facts cited as supporting these views are the rarity of large families among the Fijians and the high rate of still-births. In connection with the latter fact one writer mentions the native superstition that when a woman has been unfaithful to her husband her child will not live.

351. Two means of procuring abortion are mentioned, namely, drugs and instruments. Infusions of herbs are said to be used either to prevent conception or to kill the foetus during the early months of pregnancy; and one correspondent declares that the natives believe abortion during the first and second months of pregnancy, even if frequently repeated, to be attended by no evil consequences to the woman; at a later stage of pregnancy instruments must be used, and they admit this operation to be difficult and even dangerous.

Opinions differ regarding the effect of the drugs used to produce sterility—as might be expected among a number of laymen writing upon a subject not yet thoroughly investigated by physiologists—but the belief that, even where these drugs do not effect the desired object, they cause other functional disorders appears to be general.

352. The remedies suggested are,—

- (1) More rigorous application of the law against abortion.
- (2) Abolition of the penalty for fornication.
- (3) Discouragement of the custom of separating husband and wife during the period of lactation.
- (4) Systematic examination by experts of the drugs used to procure miscarriage.
- (5) Institution of inquests on infant deaths.

[The penalties for procuring abortion are, of course, invariably inflicted when a conviction is obtained, but sufficient evidence can be so rarely forthcoming that but few prosecutions have been instituted. We have dealt elsewhere with the questions of abolishing the penalty for fornication, and of the custom, fast decaying, of sexual abstention. While a detailed report upon the properties of native drugs would be highly interesting it would not, we think, repay the necessary outlay with results equal to those attainable by the same expenditure in other directions.]

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353. We have examined a number of native witnesses on the practice of abortion, foeticide, and prevention of conception, including three hereditary midwives of the class alleged to be professional procurers of abortion. They agree generally in stating that whereas in former times the practice of abortion was limited to a few professional midwives, to whom women desirous of undergoing the operation would resort, some of the secrets of the trade are now common property among the women, and that in consequence the act is often unskilfully attempted by the grandmother or other older female relative of the pregnant woman, or even by one of her companions.

The drugs credited with being effective ecbolics vary in different districts; but one of our witnesses, a woman of wide experience in native midwifery, stated her belief that miscarriage was more often caused by distress of mind at the discovery of pregnancy than by any drugs that might be administered.

Certain drugs are also taken with the intention of preventing conception, and are collectively termed *wai ni yava*, but the belief in their efficacy does not appear to be general. We were, however, assured by one witness from Vanualevu that suckling children die because mothers anxious to prevent a second conception drink such medicines.

The natives veil the practice with so much secrecy that a proper investigation of their methods has hitherto been impossible. The extent of the custom can only be a matter for conjecture, but we believe that it is far more common than may be gathered from the number of prosecutions entered in the courts. There is a freemasonry among the women which conceals the practice not only from the police but even from their husbands and fathers. The natives of Vanualevu are generally reputed

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reputed to be the most adept in procuring abortion; and this belief receives colour from the fact that the three provinces included in that island show the abnormally high still-birth-rate of 10 per cent. of the total births, while their general birth-rate is the lowest in the Colony.

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354. There are two principal inducements to women to procure miscarriage,—

- (1) The disgrace and inconvenience attending the pregnancy of an unmarried woman.
- (2) The disinclination of a woman to give birth to the child of a man she dislikes.

Our inquiries do not show that abortion is commonly practised from the mere abstract disinclination to rear children. The reproach suffered by the mother of an illegitimate child is not the result of the introduction of Christianity, although the suppression by the Mission authorities, in the case of illegitimate births, of the feasts and presentations that attend other births, and the refusal of the sacrament of baptism to illegitimate children, tend to increase the disgrace attaching to illegitimate births. Native witnesses, however, agree in declaring that such cases brought even more shame upon families of all but the lowest class in heathen times than at present—unless indeed the putative father of the child was of high rank. The practice of abortion was moreover not regarded as a criminal act in heathen times. But while in many cases the shame of a first illegitimate pregnancy is sufficient to cause a girl to destroy the foetus before her condition be made known, there is another motive which is unfortunately equally potent. If Fijian women object to tending children born in wedlock, much more do they recoil from the burden of maternity coupled with the disgrace of illegitimacy. To the natural tendency of women who have once miscarried to repeat the accident is added the temptation to undergo, for the second time, an operation that has already been successful.

We should not have deemed the second of the above-mentioned inducements worthy of mention had not actual cases been brought under our notice. In bitter quarrels between husband and wife, the woman, if pregnant, occasionally attempts to destroy the foetus, but such cases are not sufficiently common to have any appreciable influence upon the birth-rate.

355. The methods adopted by Fijians for effecting premature expulsion of the impregnated ovum from the womb are, as in other countries, either mechanical or toxic. The latter are, in our opinion, resorted to by them the more often. Drugs of this nature are generally spoken of among the natives as *wai ni vakalutu*, and are implicitly believed in. We see no reason why some of them should not be as efficacious for the purpose as the medicinal agents employed by civilised peoples, though the modes of preparation are naturally more crude. They are all derived from the vegetable kingdom,—the leaves, bark, stem, or root selected, being prepared by trituration or chewing, and then infused in water. The potions employed by natives are consequently as a rule more nauseous and greater in bulk than the extracts known to modern pharmacy. That their employment is free from danger to pregnant women is hardly to be believed. Any illegitimate interference with the course of Nature must involve some risk. We have heard of several instances in which long illnesses have followed such attempts to procure miscarriage, and are satisfied that fatal results do sometimes ensue. One of our witnesses, however, stated that it was extremely difficult to procure abortion by the administration of drugs. The more permanent effect of a procured miscarriage seems to be a disposition on the part of the woman to miscarry again in subsequent pregnancies. Such consequences are only to be expected. The “wise women” appear to know to some extent that drugs which irritate the bowel have an indirect effect upon the pelvic viscera. Adi Ama of Namata stated in evidence that old women caution married girls against drinking *wai vuso*, literally ‘frothy drink,’ meaning a certain class of native medicine made from the stems of climbing plants whose sap lends a soapy or frothy quality to their infusion. These nostrums are given under various pretexts, but principally as cathartics. We were assured by one witness that the use of herbs is not confined to the

the attempts to procure abortion, but that women also take certain drugs in order to induce conception.

Of mechanical means, the foremost is the *sau*. This instrument is generally a skewer made of *losilos* wood, or a reed. It is employed, of course, to pierce the membranes, and in unskilful hands might unquestionably be the means of causing grave injury to the womb or its adjacencies. We have been assured by Adi Lusiana that there are persons living who bear the mark of the *sau* on their heads. She mentioned a man in Taviuni who is scarred in this way, and pointed to the right temporal region as the situation of the wound. Her statement was corroborated by other trustworthy witnesses; and the fact that the right parietal bone would be the normally presenting part in most cases prior to the commencement of labour, lends something more than the similitude of truth to the story. Indeed the most remarkable circumstance about it is, perhaps, that abortion having been designed and successfully accomplished, the child should have been allowed to live.

It is laid down in "Taylor's Medical Jurisprudence"* that this mode of perpetrating abortion is only likely to succeed in the hands of persons who have an anatomical knowledge of the parts.

We have already recorded our views, and again assert, that the Fijians, even the midwives and wise women, cannot be said to possess the most elementary anatomical knowledge, and as to physiology or biology their minds are a complete blank.

356. Other methods of inducing abortion by violence, such as are known and practised by white women, do not appear to be commonly resorted to by the Fijians. The correspondents who allude to medicines and the *sau* have not directly mentioned any; but there seems to be an impression in some quarters that certain manual operations which midwives are in the habit of performing under the pretext of alleviating the ailments of pregnancy do as a matter of practice, whether by accident or by design, not infrequently end in a radical cure by causing the expulsion of the fœtus.

It is not long since a notorious instance of treatment by *bobo* (massage) occurred at Rewa. In this case a pregnant woman who suffered pain and discomfort was received into the Colonial Hospital. After a week's observation of her condition the Medical Officer allowed her to go home and advised her to quietly await the term of her gestation, as there appeared to be nothing more wrong than some functional derangement dependent upon pressure. Soon afterwards she passed into the hands of a distinguished amateur 'wise woman,' who attempted to exorcise the spirits by practising violent massage upon the sufferer. The evidence taken at the magisterial inquiry which followed showed that the shampoosings were generally directed from the more solid parts towards the breaches of continuity, the eyes, mouth, ears, the extremities of the limbs, and the genital aperture—the possible points of escape for the evil ones who were presumed to be the source of the trouble. The woman died; and the facts were concealed from the authorities for some weeks. Unfortunately it could not be proved whether abortion was aimed at in this case or whether the treatment was directed solely to the removal of pains.

357. It is clear that abortion is no less mischievous a practice amongst the natives of Fiji, than elsewhere; and that harm results from empirical and bungling attempts to dose and manipulate pregnant women, whether directed towards the removal of the fœtus or not.

One form of *vakasilima* (*vide* "Native Medical Treatment and Nursing"), consists in taking pregnant women, who are ailing or said to be ailing, into the water, to be there subjected to a vaginal examination by the "wise woman" or nurse. The account given is that by means of this examination she is enabled to ascertain the condition of the *os uteri*, and through this digital diagnosis to discover what particular herb is to be used either for local application or internal administration; and it is suggested that the conveyance to the sea or river, and the examination under water, are means adopted for cleanliness only; but as there are some women who devote

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devote themselves especially to this branch of their art it is possible that, in some cases at any rate, it may be only a pretext for the procuring of abortion; and it is probable that a rough manipulation of the *os uteri* may excite uterine contractions, and so favour the expulsion of the immature foetus. Under any circumstances it is difficult to see what benefit the patient can derive from this form of treatment; and, in common with other similar forms of *vakasilima*, it should certainly be discontinued.

As bearing on the physical idiosyncrasy of the mothers of families living in the twelve towns of which a census was taken, we ascertained that of the 448 mothers of existing families, 55 have been subjects of abortions or miscarriages.

Thus 12·7 of the mothers—or rather more than one-eighth—have had to contend with this physical weakness.

In provinces that show a birth-rate exceeding 35 per mille, attempts at abortion may be comparatively rare; but in the provinces that show a markedly low or decreasing birth-rate, such as Macuata, Bua, Cakaudrove, and Tailevu, and particularly in those that show also a high still-birth-rate, we think it probable that criminal abortion is the cause of the deviation from the higher rate of the other provinces.

358. The law already prescribes penalties sufficiently repressive if they could be enforced. Regulation No. 2 of 1887 provides a penalty of not exceeding three years' imprisonment with hard labour for "making use of any means, whether by instruments or by the administration of drugs or by any other means, with the object or for the purpose of causing abortion or barrenness." But the local native officers seldom obtain evidence sufficient to warrant a prosecution. It is, of course, most difficult to prove that herbs were taken with the intention of causing miscarriage or of preventing conception in the face of the contention of the accused person that the drug was administered to cure some passing ailment. Last year, however, a Regulation (No. 5 of 1892) was passed requiring inquests to be held by Native Magistrates in all cases of still-birth and infant death occurring within their respective districts, in the hope of at least intimidating procurers of abortion even if they do not occasionally furnish evidence to justify a prosecution. Post-mortem examinations of women dying in premature confinement would doubtless have their effect, but the repugnance which Fijians feel to these examinations, would, we fear, lead to the concealment of death in such cases, even if the District Medical Officers could afford the time for conducting them. The only practical recommendation we can therefore make is that certain forms of native treatment be prohibited by Regulation, as indicated under the head of "Native Medical Treatment and Nursing," and that the native officers, especially those of the last-named provinces, be stimulated to use greater diligence in bringing offenders to justice—a movement which would be materially assisted by the appointment of European officers as Sanitary Inspectors and Chiefs of Provincial Police as suggested under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws."

XXIII.—PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AFFECTING FECUNDITY, AND DISEASES OF GESTATION.

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359. Six writers believe that a weak physical condition in the native women injuriously affects both their fecundity and the vitality of their offspring. One of them,—a gentleman living in Vanualevu, where the birth-rate is consistently much lower than in the other islands of the Group,—declares that not more than two children on an average are born to a married couple. This, though perhaps true of the natives living in his immediate neighbourhood, is far from being the case throughout the Colony. He further observes that native women, almost barren when wedded to a native husband, are prolific when married to an European,—a statement that we have been unable to verify as being of general application.

Another writer says that many children are born with congenital disease, among which he instances yaws. We have, however, been unsuccessful in our endeavour to find a case of yaws contracted before birth.

A medical writer suggests that scrofula and leprosy have much to do with the "puniness" of infants and the heavy mortality among them. He also cites immaturity at birth, as a fruitful source of increment to the infant death-rate.

Yaws—a disease universally prevalent—is believed to leave effects in after-life prejudicial to the bearing of healthy children. It is in fact pointed out that yaws may often react as severely as tertiary syphilis in a parent.

It is remarked that the native woman is more in need of improvement than the males of her race, but that she has received less attention from the missionary bodies, and has not benefited from the introduction of Christianity to the same extent as the men have.

360. The improvement of the condition of women is urged as the first step in the direction of saving the race from extinction.

Opinions upon the best way of raising the status of the native women are divided between the methods of coercion and persuasion. She is the drudge of her husband and destroys her health by injurious occupations as well as by excessive work. Therefore, it is said, let her be forbidden to overwork herself in the fields, or to perform other than purely domestic work, and let the Regulation forbidding her to carry heavy burdens, which is almost a dead-letter, be rigidly enforced.

Two writers think that repressive measures would not of themselves suffice. Their case is epigrammatically, if somewhat grimly, put thus, "The girls and younger women are by nature unthinking; they are also perverse, selfish, and headstrong to a degree. They can no longer be flogged or eaten; they must therefore be educated." The advocates of education think that the instruction now given to native girls—that of reading, writing, and sewing—is too far removed from the necessities of their daily life to influence their characters for good, and urge that the aid, instruction, and sympathy, which alone could effect a change, can be given only by a band of devoted women, moving from village to village, under the auspices of some organised Mission.

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361. A vital point in determining the fertility of ordinarily healthy women is the length of time during which the ovaries continue to perform their function. The development of the Fijian female is precocious chiefly during youth and early middle life, whereas the men appear to age most rapidly after passing their prime. The writer of Reply No. 9 estimates the child-bearing competence of Fijian women to cover twenty years. We believe this to be less than is actually the case; for the majority of women in most countries do not reach the menopause before forty-three years of age, and we know no reason for believing that Fijian women differ in this respect from others who live in similar latitudes.

362. There is a consensus of opinion among the correspondents that families of more than two children living are exceptional; but we know of several instances of four and five, and one case has been mentioned to us in which nine children out of ten born of the same parents survive at the present time. The tenth was still-born.

One of our best witnesses, a lady of Bau, has assured us that her pregnancies numbered seventeen. Of these, four ended in miscarriage; and of the thirteen living children born to her only four survive at the present time. These four, she observed, are just those whom she nourished and tended herself, and were her only children by a man not her orthogamous cousin (*davolana*).

363. But it was shown, at paragraph 202 *et seq.* of this Report, that the birth-rate of the Colony is high, and that the decrease of population is not due to sterility but to infant mortality.

There is, in fact, little doubt that the women now bear children at shorter intervals than was the case in former times, and that they have to endure this added functional strain under less favourable circumstances than attended the women of bygone generations.

After a study of the replies to the Circular and of the evidence we collected from experienced and intelligent natives, and a perusal of many reports on the inquiries recently instituted regarding the death of native infants, we do not doubt that

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that a great many Fijian women go on bearing weakly children which fail to survive a year from their birth, and that many of these deaths are the outcome of constitutional atony on the maternal side.

364. The physical conditions affecting fecundity are necessarily of a complex character. They may be studied in medical treatises of recognised authority, but are scarcely suited for any detailed discussion in a report of this kind. In alluding, therefore, to such conditions as are of common occurrence in Fijian women, we assume that some technical knowledge will be brought to their consideration.

Fecundity depends upon influences which originate either with the mother, or with the father.

Some of the former relate to constitutional unsoundness in the woman, and may be termed general; others have to do with local organic defects or conditions of the woman's reproductive apparatus.

Of the general influences on Fijian women, one of the most marked is a languishing habit of body attributed to malnutrition, scrofula, or tuberculosis, and over-frequent gestation, and is commented on under the head of *dabe*.

Inflammatory and catarrhal disorders are common accompaniments of the strumous state, which thus tends not only to check fecundity but to mar the vitality of such children as are born. Leprosy is perhaps the most conspicuous of all general diseases in causing barrenness. Yaws leaves behind it a depression of the vital powers analogous to the cachexia of tertiary syphilis, especially when contracted later than in childhood; and it seems fair to reason that the effects of yaws upon the ovum may be no less disastrous than those of syphilis.

The epidemic of measles in 1875 must have been the direct cause of a large number of abortions and premature births in its survivors. It may be supposed to have left more lasting traces, by inducing, as measles often does, catarrhal affections of the womb which impede conception. We feel assured that peculiarities of constitution, especially scrofula or tuberculosis, are answerable for many of the premature deaths occurring in the children of mothers affected by those diseases; and we know that these form a notable proportion of the race.

We also think that the influence of those zymotic diseases with which the native race has been brought into contact during this century,—dysentery, influenza, measles, and perhaps dengue,—have had some part in determining the excessive mortality of infants born alive at the full term, as well as of the *fœtus in utero*.

365. Of the local conditions that restrict increase perhaps the principal may be referred to the practice of abortion, for it must be borne in mind that one miscarriage tends to bring about the same accident in subsequent gestations. Moreover, by inducing inflammatory and catarrhal disorders of the womb or its appendages, it diminishes the chances of future conception; and thus reacts in a twofold manner in restraining the birth-rate.

In connection with the subject of the low birth-rate in Vanualevu (which is lower than in all other parts of Fiji, and where the still-births are more numerous) the natives of Bua, Vanualevu, lately appointed a Board of Matrons to make investigations, and imposed upon them the task of examining and comparing the experiences of unfruitful women. They were to report their views as to the causes of the decrease in population. The matrons agreed that displacement, or what perhaps is best translated as a “canting” of the womb (*gole vakatani na kato ni gone*) was a condition frequently met with, and very plausibly ascribed failure of fertilisation to this defect. We regret very much that no means have offered for procuring proper examination of some of the subjects,—the sentiments of the people and the nature of the questions to be solved presenting obvious difficulties in the way of effecting it in any general way.

366. Medical inspection of the bodies of still-born children, and post-mortem examination of mothers who die while pregnant or at parturition, are the best and we fear the only efficient means by which the precise nature of these accidents in Fijian women can be learned. Such investigations should throw light upon the extent to which, for instance, fatty degeneration of the placenta occurs in Fijian mothers,—a defect acknowledged to be one of the commonest results of syphilis and

and of scrofula; and though we may eliminate the former from our consideration—the natives being free from it—we must supply its place by yaws, which is all but universal.

But the opportunities for such investigations are few. The natives live in small and scattered populations, the European Medical Staff number eight officers only, when complete, and travelling is arduous and slow. Fijian women rarely resort to European doctors for the treatment of anomalies of the reproductive function,—it is not the custom for Fijian men to meddle in such matters, and they possess in fact neither knowledge nor skill. Fijian women are thus at the mercy of native midwives; and we believe that the empirical treatment to which sufferers are subjected by these “wise women” tends to considerably swell the number of abortions with all the objectionable effects that arise from such occurrences,—a subject dealt with under the head of “Native Medical Treatment and Nursing.”

367. Sterility on the paternal side is no doubt as rare among Fijians during youth and early middle age as among other peoples. The men, however, participate in the constitutional taints of the race to an extent not less than the women do. And we are informed by medical men in the Colony that Fijian males after the age of forty, and Europeans in Fiji as well, do at times suffer a loss of stamina which, while it lasts, renders them unfruitful.

368. Work during pregnancy, and fishing by child-bearing women—conditions that may be inimical to the bearing of healthy children—are dealt with in the succeeding articles, *vide* paragraphs 371 to 376.

369. To summarise:—

- (1) The fecundity of native women as evidenced by the birth-rate is satisfactory, except in certain provinces.
- (2) The heavy infant mortality, which is mainly responsible for the decrease of the population, arises—apart from defective nursing and feeding, and the occurrence of epidemic diseases—from
 - (a) Constitutional atony of the mothers, attributable to their malnutrition, to scrofula or tuberculosis, and over-frequent gestation, and to the effects of yaws and epidemics (principally measles).
 - (b) Local conditions arising from previous miscarriages, and maltreatment by native midwives.
 - (c) To some extent from work during pregnancy, and fishing.

370. The remedies applicable to these evils lie mainly in the direction of improving the food supply of the people and the general sanitation. Little can be done with the present generation, except to embrace every opportunity to induce the men to assume the whole work of providing food, so as to elevate the women from the position of plantation drudges in those provinces where they hold that status. If, however, we may judge of the result of such a movement from the condition of the provinces where women have been to some extent relieved of plantation work, we must conclude that the proposed steps will avail nothing unless they are supplemented by the establishment of a Ladies' Sanitary Mission or some agency calculated to instruct the women in the care of their offspring and in their proper feminine occupations.

We have hope, however, that, if such an agency is introduced, further measures adapted to the needs of the individuals will be spontaneously adopted as the people advance in civilisation.

XXIV.—WORK DURING PREGNANCY.

Digest of Replies.

371. Fifteen writers allude to the heavy work performed by native women during pregnancy. Fishing and carrying heavy loads of firewood are described as the most injurious forms of labour at this stage; and a medical writer says that women are likely to bear dead, ill-developed or sickly children so long as they continue

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continue to carry on their backs heavy burdens of firewood, pots, yams, *dalo*, and a dozen other things in defiance of the Native Regulation. Another writer states that the women in Bua carry loads of yams of 80 or 90 lbs. weight, 6 or 8 miles, climbing and descending a range 700 feet high. When remonstrated with, the usual appeal to custom is made: "My mother did so; and why not I?"

While it seems to be the opinion of the writers that the women are compelled to do heavy work against their will, one writer says—"When the time draws near for their confinement, many women purposely carry huge loads of firewood on their backs, lift heavy weights, or perform some unusually laborious task, with the idea that it will give them a quick delivery."

The remedy suggested is a more rigorous application of the Native Regulation forbidding women to carry heavy loads during pregnancy.

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372. The native opinion upon this subject is that steady work during pregnancy, so long as it is unaccompanied by sudden shocks or severe strains, has an advantageous effect. Women make, therefore, little difference in the nature of their occupations until the seventh month of pregnancy; but, although they do not recognise field labour as involving danger to pregnant women, they have a belief that the heat of the sun on the small of a woman's back, whether she be carrying loads or weeding, will damage the unborn child. In the old days a woman was not allowed during her first pregnancy to go to work for five months, except to some light work such as crab-hunting; but now it is said they do all sorts of work. In some parts, however, pregnant women do little work until after the time of quickening. In Vitilevu they weed the plantations, carry firewood and water, engage in fishing, and otherwise pursue the ordinary round of toil to which the women of their tribe are accustomed. In Lau, Taviuni, Lomaiviti, and, in a lesser degree, Vanulevu, the women are more free from severe labour; and yet in the latter island, as we have already shown, the birth-rate is lower and the still-birth-rate higher than in any other district.

The principal dangers to pregnant women are to be found in the avocations of wood-carrying and fishing. In the former they are liable to strain themselves, and in the latter they may slip and sustain a shock dangerous to the unborn child. But, taking into consideration their robust frames and less impressionable natures, they probably run less risk of such accidents than do European women in the ordinary occurrences of civilised life.

373. We do not therefore think that any restriction is called for besides the better enforcement of the Native Regulation forbidding women to carry heavy burdens. At the same time we believe that a reversion to the custom of partial abstention from work, during first pregnancies at least, should be advocated. A sense of responsibility on the part of the women themselves can only be inculcated by such education as would be imparted by a Ladies' Sanitary Mission.

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XXV.—FISHING BY CHILD-BEARING WOMEN.

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374. Ten writers comment upon the Fijian women's custom of spending many hours in the water fishing, even during pregnancy. Two modes of fishing are alluded to,—the first, and more general, being with hand-nets used by women standing waist-deep in the sea, and the second, by diving for shell-fish at the bottom of the tidal rivers.

With regard to the former mode, one writer observes that sea fishing is more successfully carried on in stormy weather because the fish then approach the shore. Pregnant women, we are told, remain in their wet clothes, "their faces dusky-white with cold," until the clothes dry on their bodies.

In river fishing also the women remain in the water for three or four hours in all weathers, and, on their return home, wet and shivering as they are, they have to gather firewood, light the fire, and boil the pot.

It

It is claimed that this exposure tends to produce premature confinement and sickly offspring,—besides, perhaps, having a detrimental effect upon the supply of breast-milk.

It is, moreover, pointed out by a medical writer that women, at the bidding of their husbands, engage in fishing at periods when they should especially avoid the risk of chills, and that this practice damages the prospects of their unborn children.

Fishing expeditions would, it is said, be unnecessary if the fish-fences, and poultry-yards, and pigsties, were properly managed.

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375. The frequency with which women go fishing for long periods in the daytime, and join netting-parties at night, is said to be responsible for much injury to themselves and, indirectly, to their infants. There are times, of course, when women should not expose themselves to prolonged immersion or to chills: and river fishing for mussel, of all others, is inseparable from these conditions, inasmuch as it involves staying in water from 3 to 5 feet in depth for several hours off and on, and is not accompanied by any regular or warming exercise. If native women are so ignorant or so venturesome as to face this risk, suppression of the catamenia must often result; and we believe, as a fact, that it does so.

An intelligent native officer informed us that the natives are beginning to notice that fishing at certain times checks the catamenia. As a rule only local pains prevent the women engaging in fishing at such times. This man stated that he has always been of opinion that fishing at these periods was hurtful, and he had (with some difficulty, however) prevented it among the women under his control. He has a family of five children living.

We do not find that the sea-fishing after confinement, spoken of by one writer, is generally practised; on the contrary, it is forbidden by ancient custom throughout the period of lactation.

It is pointed out that although the women of Tonga and Samoa do not carry heavy weights or do severe labour yet they engage in fishing, which is described as equally dangerous to pregnant women; and the simultaneous decrease throughout the three Groups, it is thought, is probably attributable to this cause. In this connection we were also informed that the Tokalau women, whose prolificness is proverbial, do not engage in fishing.

376. We must deprecate diving for shell-fish by pregnant women and suckling-mothers, both for their own sakes and that of their offspring, and we think that it should be discouraged as far as possible. But as regards other kinds of fishing, principally in the salt water, either on the reefs, on the foreshore with nets, in the estuaries procuring *drose*, or in the pools and creeks collecting prawns, we are not assured that any harm results,—or that, if it does, it is not more than compensated for by the supply of fish food for which it is undertaken. We do not think that it would be wise to hamper the people with Regulations which might appear to restrict their inborn privileges and freedom in such matters; nor do we believe that if such were framed they would be respected.

Unless they are compelled to prolong the occupation far beyond its ordinary limits Fijian women do not generally regard fishing as labour, but rather as a diversion; and they would keenly resent, as arbitrary and irrational, any statutory interference with their liberties in this respect.

XXVI.—UNSKILLED MIDWIFERY.

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377. Four writers attribute a part of the infant mortality to clumsy midwifery. A native *matanivanua* is quoted as saying that all the skilled midwives capable of caring for and feeding infants when deprived of their mother's care were swept away in the measles. One writer states that the clumsy operation called "taking women to the water" to cure some ailment incidental to the condition of pregnancy

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pregnancy results in "abortion or serious vaginal complications." Another writer, describing the custom in the Lau province, declares that, from the moment pregnancy is ascertained, the mother is subjected to a system of dosing with herbs by persons ignorant of the drug they are administering. The midwife is not always skilled, and the infant, as soon as it is born, is compelled to swallow native drugs on its own account.

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378. The matter of Native Midwifery practice has been touched upon in a few of the responses but, owing doubtless to its technical nature, very little has been stated about it. We have, however, considered the subject to be one of great importance, especially as it seemed possible that waste of infant life might occur through the ignorance or neglect of the orthodox means of assisting and taking care of parturient women and their offspring. For this reason we have been at some pains to gather a detailed description of the Native procedure in cases of child-birth, and our examination into questions of native midwifery practice has furnished some interesting information.

379. With Fijians the event of child-birth is the signal for seclusion rather than publicity. Only a few female friends of the lying-in woman are admitted to the house when she is in labour,—no such mixed and numerous attendance as is customary in Tonga on such occasions being tolerated.

When the pains begin to make themselves felt a squatting posture is usually assumed, but, during the throes of child-birth, a Fijian woman ordinarily resigns herself into a supine, semi-recumbent position, two friends sitting behind the patient and supporting her shoulders while the midwife stations herself in front.

Physiologically regarded, this is a disadvantageous position, but it appears to be adopted by chance rather than by design. The woman reclines of course on the matted-floor of the house—bedsteads or raised bed-places not being in use by any section of the race. But it is proper here to mention that in certain districts, notably Ba and its neighbourhood, women often repair to the open air for the occasion of child-birth. Digital examinations are made by the midwife for the purpose of discovering the presentation, which is generally normal. The membranes are not usually tampered with, and practically nothing is done until the birth of the child has been naturally effected. Then the midwife clears its mouth of mucus, by wiping it away with her fingers or removing it with her lips. There seems to be no definite understanding as to the precise stage at which the umbilical cord should be severed. Some of the witnesses asserted that they knew that the cord pulsates, but that they were not aware of its significance. (The Fijians do not understand that the blood circulates.) They wait, however, until the child cries or breathes before dividing it. When the child emits no cry, the general practice is to compress the cord lightly between two fingers or between the thumb and a finger, and, by passing these along it, to squeeze onwards the blood from the mother in the direction of the child. Sometimes they rattle a bunch of *kitu** near the child's ear in the hope of awakening it. Nothing is known of the methods or value of artificial respiration in such cases, nor of the use of cold water,† and instances have been recorded which render it certain that some children perish by reason of this ignorance. The custom in severing the *funis* is to measure it from the navel to the knee, and then cut it with a mussel-shell, or a sharp piece of bamboo or reed.‡ It is cut square across: it is not scagged or scraped through. Nowadays scissors are sometimes used. It is never tied or knotted, nor is any other kind of ligature, pressure, or torsion adopted. Fijians never sever the cord by biting, as is done by some savage races. Native opinions are at variance as to whether bleeding ever occurs in consequence of the cord not being tied. The midwives deny that it does, but there seems to be an impression that it is a good thing for the cord to drain out

* A *kitu* is a cocoanut-shell cleaned and bored, used in some parts of Fiji as a receptacle for fresh water. The baby's rattle referred to here is a bunch of *kitu*.

† In Tonga, however, cold water is applied in extreme cases.

‡ In the Gilbert Islands it is measured to the forehead, and no ligature is employed. In Tonga it is customary to cut it the length of the forefinger and to tie it with a ligature of native bark cloth.

out the "bad blood" contained in it. Division of the umbilical cord without ligature is not so unsafe a measure as it may at first appear. The experience of obstetricians goes to show that in such cases the greater the length of the cord left attached to the child the less is the risk of hæmorrhage; but a clean cut made transversely is more likely than an oblique one or a laceration to allow bleeding to follow. After division the foetal end is wrapped in a small piece of bark cloth, and coiled down on the abdomen. Blood oozes from it and is absorbed by the cloth, which has occasionally to be changed.

As soon as the child has cried, and the cord has been cut, an attendant removes it, and washes it in water not warmed. At the same juncture a drink of cold water is given to the mother with a view of stimulating the uterus to contract and shed the after-birth. The prevalent opinion as to this process is that the placenta is generally extruded spontaneously, but delay is uncommon, and retention of the placenta is as rare as it is dangerous, and is the one contingency dreaded by pregnant women. In the hill country of Vitilevu, labour seems to be more easy and expeditious than on the coast, yet, strange to say, the midwives of the uplands, three of whom we examined, bear the reputation of being specially clever, and, notwithstanding their less varied experience, they appear to follow more orthodox methods than their sisters of the coast, but like the latter they are entirely ignorant of the construction of the human body, and of the functions of its several organs and parts. Their practice is consequently quite as empirical in child-birth cases as it is in matters relating to nursing in illness.

Inland, the midwives often introduce the hand for effecting extraction of the placenta. On the coast, they prefer to await its complete extrusion by natural means, and have a decided objection to giving manual assistance in this process, saying that it is a dangerous practice, and one they neither understand nor care to commit themselves to. In cases where the delay is considerable—the customary drink of cold water having been given—herbal infusions are administered; even local external applications in the nature of cataplasms are said to be used, but the excellent and safe expedient of stimulating and compressing the uterus by the hand placed on the abdomen is quite unknown amongst Fijian midwives—a circumstance somewhat surprising in a nation of masseuses. It seems clear that Fijian mothers occasionally die from retained placenta, and that in such cases the midwife is blamed if perchance she have attempted any manual interference. One witness stated that some women go so far as to live in dread of pregnancy, through the popular fear of retained placenta.

An occasional circumstance which the midwives seem to misunderstand, and to deal wrongly with, is the non-delivery of portions of the membranes. They lay particular stress on the impropriety of removing such fragments, "*ai kubekube*," (the cleavings,) even when they have been in part extruded spontaneously, and, on the contrary, take particular pains to secure them by tying them down *in loco* under a bandage of bark cloth, trusting the rest to nature. But they admit that women to whom this happens usually remain feverish and ill for some time, and they evidently consider the situation precarious.

A medicine termed *wai-ni-lutu-vata* (medicine for simultaneous birth) is sometimes given during the later months of pregnancy with the object of conducing to an easy labour and to the descent of the placenta at the proper moment.

After the conclusion of the third stage of labour some midwives in Colo introduce the hand as far as the *bai ni yate*,* lit: (fence of the liver) or the *tuvu ni gone** (foetal source), and, flexing the fingers, clear out all the clots they find. Others raise the mother to a sitting posture to facilitate their discharge by gravitation,—a preferable practice.

380. A good deal of stress has been laid in Paper No. 59 on the virtues of turmeric. It used to be the practice in most parts of Polynesia to anoint lying-in women and their infants with cocoanut-oil and turmeric.† The custom is still extensively followed both in and out of Fiji; but though natives cling to the use of oil, the habit of besmearing the body with turmeric has to some considerable extent

* Fornix vaginae.

† Mariner: vol. ii, p. 273.

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extent been relinquished, owing, it seems, to discredit being thrown upon it by native zealots, who regard it as a relic of the old heathen cult. It is difficult to understand why they should draw the line at turmeric while they do not disapprove of oil. Our inquiries into the subject have failed to elicit any precise mythological or superstitious reason for the employment of turmeric in this fashion. The natives say that it is simply used as a cosmetic, and that it promotes warmth and smoothness of skin. But the history of the *Naga* ceremony in olden times in Fiji, as gathered by the writer of Paper No. 9, shows that turmeric was used as an unguent in certain heathen observances, and that the turmeric plant itself was referred to in the legend connected with them.* It is probable that it thus savours of some heathen or superstitious element, and has been discouraged on this account since the diffusion of the Christian religion in the islands. Many of these customs though surrounded by objectionable doctrinal colouring are good in themselves and take their origin from sound bases.

In the case of turmeric (a plant belonging to the *Zingiberaceæ* or Ginger order, which grows as a weed all over Fiji), we would point out that it is a mildly stimulating and aromatic condiment;† and it also has effects which indicate an antiseptic virtue and soothing quality,‡ which we can understand to be warming, cleansing and healthful to both the newly-born infant and the parturient mother. Besides these direct advantages to be secured by the use of turmeric, we cannot help thinking that the continuance of a harmless custom such as this is conducive to the welfare of mother and child, from the mere fact of its fixing the attention of the relatives and nurses on their charge. If heedfulness of detail is encouraged, even at the cost of spending time and labour on trivialities, the better attention of native 'wise women' and friends will be secured. On the other hand, if the observance of such minutiae is relaxed, the whole conduct of a case will presently become a perfunctory service.

381. The accidents of child-birth appear to be few with Fijian women. Still-births number about 6 per cent., and amount in some provinces to 10 per cent., but inquiries have indicated that they represent cases of foetal death before confinement more often than during delivery.

382. Much has been said about hard work performed by native women when pregnant, and about resuming their daily occupations sooner after child-birth than is good for them. The native belief as to work during pregnancy is that a woman should keep quiet up to the time of quickening, and do no heavy labour, but that thenceforward the more she works the easier will her confinement be. This with the Fijians is an universal maxim, but we found that the customs during the lying-in period vary with different individuals and in different parts of Fiji. In Namosi, some parts of Colo, and the province of Ba, many women leave their house as early as the day after delivery. They generally do so about the fifth day. But at Bau, and amongst the better classes generally, a woman not unusually lies on her mats for a much longer time than that, and stays within the house for a whole month. We were informed that some women abstain from all labour except pure domestic work for a period of three months after confinement,—an institution known as the *bogi drau* (hundred days).

383. In western Vitilevu it is a common thing for confinements to take place out of doors. In some instances a temporary hut is run up near the family yam-garden, which is often situated at a great distance from the village, and the pregnant woman repairs thither to take up her quarters for the event. No mats are used on such occasions, but only grass or hay; as a rule there is no midwife, often not even a grandmother, and the woman attends to her own delivery. The key to these primitive habits may be found in the belief in witchcraft. The tribes in that part of Fiji are for the most part split up into small factions, and possess no supreme chief. Their society is formed rather after the fashion of the Melanesians, with whom they are more closely linked by geographical position

* "Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie:" bd. ii, 1889.

† "The Elements of *Materia Medica*."—Edited by Bently and Redwood, London.

‡ "The Bazaar Medicines and common Medical Plants of India;" by E. J. Waring, M.D., London, 1875.

position, and perhaps by descent, than of the Malayo-Polynesians who have overrun the eastern and central parts of the Group. With them the individual is a power, that is, he is less a nonentity than in widespread communes ruled over by chief families of exalted rank. In the latter provinces every man was swayed by awe of the chief; in the former he feared and was feared by his neighbour and equal; and this difference still obtains.

An intelligent and educated native witness who lived for many years among the people in the province of Ba stated that, when she was there, delivery frequently took place out of doors. No preparation was made for a confinement. Events happened at hazard. The people said they were accustomed to that sort of life, and preferred it. It was a common thing for them to camp out in their yam-patches day and night for weeks together during the planting season, tending their crops. They would have one common shed for day use, while each family had its own little hut to sleep in at night. They had few tribal obligations or connections. They had no regular midwives. They object to mats or anything but grass for their babies to lie on. They bring as their *rogo** a creel, padded with dried grass, for the reception of the newly-born infant. They will not use a mat or any *masi* for the purpose, being loth to destroy it afterwards, and saying, "How will you get rid of the blood or excreta by which it will be defiled?" *Draunikan* (witchcraft) was at the bottom of all this. The object by whose means the Fijian sorcerer expects to influence his victim is usually, as with other savage races, some scrap of food, hair, clothing, or other bodily refuse, which has appertained to him. The wild people down there were afraid to use a *kali*† lest some enemy should find stray hairs sticking to it, and use them as a medium for the exercise of witchcraft against the owner. They did not even cork their water-jars, for fear of the water being bewitched by the leaves of which native stoppers or corks are made. They use pandanus instead of plantain leaves for making their cigarettes because they are tougher and leave no refuse. Their habit is to stick the stumps of smoked out cigarettes into their hair, which is very bushy and retentive, until they can burn or dispose of them in some place safe from the possible machinations of any evilly-disposed person versed in witchcraft.

This superstition and the consequent practices are dying slowly, but it is probable that the comfort of which they deprived a parturient woman was compensated for by the personal cleanliness and carefulness which they engendered. In the central and windward parts of the Colony these beliefs have not the same hold; and no sufficient substitute has yet been found to compel personal or domestic sanitation.

384. As the Gilbert Islanders are credited by Europeans with being excessively prolific, we had hoped to elicit some information of value to our inquiry by comparing the habits of the Tokalaus or Gilbert Islanders, in respect of child-bearing, with those of the Fijians; and we examined three natives of those islands with the view of checking, corroborating, and adding to what knowledge we already possessed. Our principal witness, Tearabugu, was a matron, perhaps a little over thirty years of age, who is a professional midwife among her fellow countrywomen. She had been several years in Fiji and spoke the language with exceptional clearness for a Line Islander. She had a nursling with her at the time of our inquiry.

This witness stated that on her island—Tamana—much attention is paid to women with child. They do no work during the first two months, nor while suckling: at the seventh month they are oiled. About the eighth, their limbs are given passive exercise, and they resort to a separate house for the purpose of being shampooed by adepts in the art,—the idea being to train their muscles to bear the labour pains favourably. At birth they measure the umbilical cord to the middle of the child's forehead and cut it. They do not tie it. They extract the placenta by hand if it do not come away naturally. It was also represented that the midwives are able to give assistance in cases of malpresentation. They have also the means of prematurely weaning children, if need be, by feeding them on a butter made from the fresh

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* A small specially plaited mat, which, in the more civilised parts of Fiji, does duty for a cradle.

† A native pillow made of wood or bamboo.

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fresh fruit of the pandanus. Tokalau midwives are credited with being exceptionally clever, and the labours easy and safe. The witness declared she could not recall a case which ended fatally for the mother. Abortion is common. Four or five children constitute a family to be satisfied with; and any above that number are for the most part made away with. The *sau* is not known in Tamana, nor are abortive medicines used. The more common method is to pound the abdomen with a billet of wood. This process is not fatal to the mother. All women practise abortion, because they are so prolific. If they did not, they would have ten or twenty children apiece. The witness had only three children living. Five others had died in Fiji. In Tokalau "the practice of abortion is being abandoned now, because the Church teaches that it is dangerous to the mother." Such were the opinions placed before the Commission by Tearabugu.

385. On the whole, the native midwifery methods are decidedly imperfect. We think that it would be easy to introduce a more scientific procedure in several respects, the advantages of which can be demonstrated by practical experience, such as in the posture, the treatment of the umbilical cord, in dealing with the placenta, and in the care of the child during the first hours after its birth.

Any active interference with the progress of natural delivery is of course to be deprecated. Abnormal presentations, although not frequent, do occur, and two of our witnesses declared that in such cases the child invariably dies. There is a popular belief that malpresentation is the result of an adulterous connection, and the death of the infant, although due to lack of skill on the part of the attendant, is consequently looked upon as a thing to be expected. We fear that to try to teach the mass of Fijian mothers and midwives how best to deal with such accidents as malpresentation, flooding before delivery, tedious labour requiring instrumental aid, or other serious difficulties for the overcoming of which manual or operative interference is necessary, would be as futile as it would be dangerous.

386. The giving of tactful and kindly aid in child-bed offers perhaps one of the best channels by which to gain an ascendancy over the hearts of native women. We see in this what we think may prove a favourable means for the introduction of better sanitary methods by means of trained European women. We would respectfully recommend that a miniature sanitary mission on the principle of that which Lady Dufferin has successfully established in India, and suggested in two of the Replies to the Circular (Nos. 59 and 61), be given a trial in Fiji. The training of native midwives is an object for the accomplishment of which steps might be combined with the conduct of such a sanitary mission. It would be necessarily very gradual in character, but, constituting as it would, the thin end of a wedge, we believe that it would eventually prove a very valuable measure, and one which the natives would readily fall in with, and lean upon.

387. With regard to native midwifery our conclusions are,—

- (1) That the accidents of child-birth in Fijians result most probably from lack of knowledge on the part of the native nurses.
- (2) That it would be unwise to teach these people to interfere in any way except in the way of general cleanliness, for meddling midwifery is proverbially dangerous.
- (3) That a Hygienic Mission by European women would be the best means of introducing a more scientific procedure in native midwifery, and of instilling cleanly habits into those who have the care of lying-in women, and that this mission would probably be the best means also of teaching them to give up their superstitions in connection with the subject.
- (4) That their superstitions are in many instances harmless, but that some of their practices (such as the replacing of portions of membrane and so forth) are undoubtedly dangerous.
- (5) That Fijians in most parts of the Group do not apply to European doctors or others in cases of difficult labour, probably because they are ignorant of the help they could obtain.

- (6) That they might be encouraged to thus apply to their white neighbours for assistance in cases of grave trouble. UNSKILLED MIDWIFERY.
- (7) That the practice of "taking women to the water" and there treating them for ailments incidental to pregnancy should be prohibited. This is further discussed under the head of "Native Medical Treatment and Nursing." Minute by the Commission.

XXVII.—NEGLECT OF CHILDREN BY REASON OF THE PARENTS' WORK AND ABSENCE FROM HOME.

Digest of Replies.

NEGLECT OF CHILDREN BY REASON OF THE PARENTS' WORK AND ABSENCE FROM HOME.

Digest of Replies to Circular.

388. The opinions of the eighteen writers who allude to the neglect of children by their mothers may be divided into two classes. Ten writers attribute a large proportion of the infant mortality to the injuries sustained by the children when accompanying their mothers to the plantations or fishing-grounds, while the remainder believe many deaths to be caused by the effects of fasting or accident when the children are left at home during the mother's prolonged absences in her outdoor vocations. At first sight these two views appear to conflict, but the impression conveyed by the writers is that native women maintain no regular custom in relation to their children, and that unless they believe they will be well cared for in their absence they prefer to take them to the plantations. The natural remedy for both evils is of course the abandonment of outdoor work by the women.

389. The principal evils alleged to result from the children accompanying their mothers are those of exposure. The child, it is said, is slung upon the mother's back, exposed to all weathers, while she is crab-hunting in the damp mangrove, or is left under bushes on the shore or river bank while she is engaged in fishing. One correspondent declares that in former times the fear of sudden attack from an enemy prevented women from taking children to the fishing-grounds and thus exposing them.

Upon the other side it is urged that children have to incur even greater risks when they are left at home in the charge of their grandmothers or often of children a little older than themselves. The mothers are so long away that the children suffer the pangs of hunger, and their crying is appeased by unwholesome and indigestible food. When the mother returns, cold and wet from fishing, the child is at once caught up in her arms and put to the breast, thus possibly receiving a chill that may prove fatal. An instance is given of a child whose mother's absence was so prolonged that it died of convulsions. One writer mentions the frequent entry in the "Native Birth Register" of "*Ramusu*" as a cause of death. The natives explain that this is the name given to accidents occurring to the child, when, owing to the carelessness of the person in whose charge it has been left, it has crawled or fallen over the logs of wood that serve as doorsteps and has received internal injuries. While, as we have shown under paragraph 299, a large majority of the ailments incidental to childhood are wrongly ascribed to *ramusu* by external injuries, it seems highly probable that mothers take their children to the plantations because they fear to leave them at home exposed to the risk of accident.

390. Two correspondents assert that the absence of married men on plantations or elsewhere not infrequently results in the death of their wives and children; and examples are quoted from the district of Wailevu, in Vanualevu, where married men appear to frequently evade the law by engaging as plantation labourers in distant provinces, leaving their wives and children ill-cared for during their absence.

391. Six writers address themselves to the prevention of the neglect of children. They are divided in opinion between the advantages of primitive legislation for neglect and the humanising influence of education. The advocates for the former recommend the penalty of imprisonment for persons guilty of neglecting their children. This was provided for by Regulation No. 6 of 1892, shortly after the receipt of the Replies to the Circular.

On

On the other side, one writer points out that the Fijian woman is wholly wanting in a sense of moral responsibility and would strenuously combat the charge that she habitually neglected her child. He continues,—

“I fear it (punishment) would be no remedy and but a very slight deterrent. And it might lead to the adoption of subterfuges or infanticide in other forms less easily detected or dealt with. I have but little faith in attempting to coerce or force a mother to perform her natural and reasonable duties to her offspring while her will and disposition are averse thereto.”

392. In writing of remedies for these evils, a principal place has been given, as might be expected, to the exemption of women from all work for a sufficient period after their confinement. An official reference to the case of *Buli Boubouco* is quoted as showing that the women in his district were forbidden to leave the house until three weeks after their confinement. One correspondent quotes the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, in which a suggestion was made that nursing-mothers should be prevented from working until six months after their delivery.

393. Another writer speaks of Government Regulations, which he believes to exist, exempting the fathers of newly-born children from public work, and states that before these came into force the mothers were obliged to carry loads of firewood and water while their husbands were engaged upon communal work. [He is mistaken in supposing that any such legislative restrictions are in force, and he probably refers to some executive orders emanating from the people of the district themselves in one of their monthly councils. The statement, however, tends to show that some such restriction, if made general, would be in consonance with native ideas and would, on that account, be more likely to be obeyed than the sanitary regulations enacted in obedience to European ideas of the necessary laws of health.]

The scheme of retrieving the nature of Fijian women by means of Sanitary Missionaries of their own sex is dealt with in another part of this Report.

The institution of a village crèche system is mentioned by one correspondent. He suggests,—

“That a house to be called the children’s house be set apart in the towns, in which mothers could leave their young children in charge of a woman appointed for the purpose who could be paid by contributions of food, &c., through the chief of the town.”

The institution of inquests on infantile deaths is also suggested in this connection with a view to the prevention of the neglect of children; and this has been put in force since the receipt of the Replies to the Circulars by the enactment of Native Regulation No. 5 of 1892.

394. In those provinces in which the women are not occupied in the fields, much of their time is taken up with fishing. In the former case they must choose between taking their infants with them to their outdoor occupations or leaving them to the inadequate care of the grandmother or some other relation: in the latter the infant is generally left at home. The custom of taking children to the plantations is, we believe, less productive of evil than might be supposed. The child is generally at least two months old before the mother takes it with her. Arrived there it is left to sprawl about in the shade of the yam-hut or of the nearest tree. The mother is near enough to hear its cry and to leave her work to give it nourishment. It incurs, it is true, the danger of being wetted by a shower of rain and of contracting a chill in consequence, but this is insignificant beside the risks run by a child who is left at home. In such cases the child is left in the nominal care of its grandmother, a neighbour, or a child older than itself. There is a weight of testimony to the effect that the mother’s absence is often prolonged until the child has been many hours without food, and it is thus subjected to an unwholesome irregularity of diet during the early months of its existence. But the real dangers beset the child when it is able to crawl. Not only may it sustain the injuries described in our remarks upon *ramusu* (paragraph 299) but it is allowed to gnaw or suck any object it may encounter in its wanderings

wanderings about the house. When the filthy condition of native houses is considered it is evident that its experiences in this respect must involve considerable risk. If the mother herself be neglectful of the ordinary laws of health, if she take no precaution to protect her child, during the feverish attacks to which childhood is subject, from the draughts that blow through every native house, if she bestow no special care upon her child when it is suffering from Yaws, she will at least endeavour to protect it from physical injuries resulting from accident, and will give it suck when hungry if only to quieten its cries: but in her absence the child is deprived of even the slight safeguard which the presence of its mother affords. In this respect we incline to agree with the writer of Paper No. 14, that, if children of any race suffered the same treatment as Fijian children undergo, the mortality among them would be as great.

395. We think that natives should be impressed with the necessity of preventing women from going to outdoor labour for a considerable time after child-birth,—say three months. There is no necessity for their leaving home so soon; but, as is pointed out by one of the correspondents, a woman who is longer than usual in getting to work after confinement becomes the butt of the other women. Perhaps the matter could be better reached by District Regulations than by general legislation, and this is a point on which the *Bose Vakaturaga* might be asked to advise; but it should be distinctly understood that it is the duty of the husband to fetch food, firewood, and water, for a stated period after a wife's confinement; and provision should also be made for cases in which the husband is dead or absent, or where there is no husband.

The absence of mothers from home after that period cannot be avoided until they abandon field-labour altogether, but its evils could be minimised if artificial foods for infants were in general use, and organised provision were made for the care of children during their parents' absence.

396. To induce the men to relieve the women of all outdoor work, and the women to employ their augmented leisure in the care of their children and their houses, can be the result only of very gradual reform.

But we have thought that some system of family co-operation for the care and dieting of young children would remove many of the risks they now run under the ordinary domestic régime. An arrangement in the nature of crèches might be devised, and, if successful, would enable mothers to go about their planting, food providing, and fishing operations, with the comforting knowledge that their infants would be looked after in their absence, and that their responsibility would be lessened.

397. The principal difficulty which has occurred to us as likely to be met with in organising such a scheme is that of finding native nurses who would be both competent and sufficiently conscientious to undertake and successfully perform the duty of caring for the children.

The relatives of the children to be left at home would be likely to object to any alien women being charged with the care of the children, even for a few hours on two or three days a week. But for this probability we would have suggested Tokalau (Gilbert Island) women as nurses, as they are themselves notoriously successful breeders and show great devotion to their own children and country-people in illness, and might in all probability be easily obtained, especially since their islands have been brought under British authority.

398. A village crèche system would also be incomplete without suitable and sufficient resources for infants' food. We should gladly see the Fijians turn their attention to the keeping of cows or goats. But the fact that they are singularly inept at any employment involving attention to animals is not to be gainsaid; and we fear this gap in their character will be an obstacle to the maintenance of a regular milk supply in their villages. In a tropical climate, such as that of Fiji, the very greatest care and cleanliness are essential for keeping utensils clean; and in no particular is this more emphatically necessary than with regard to infants' food and feeding-bottles, and Fijians will find it difficult to give enough heed to this.

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399. But, however this may be, the problem has to be solved. Native infants must receive adequate attention, or they will die as they now do.

Since, therefore, the women cannot be expected to at once desist from field-work, we think that, in order to take care of children in the absence of their mothers from home, a crèche system should be instituted.

After considering the matter in all its bearings we would suggest,—

- (1) That in every town where women perform outdoor labour, a house be built as a nursery or crèche. The house should conform to the other Regulations respecting dwelling-houses, the doors being so arranged that children cannot fall through them. It should also be surrounded by a fence.
- (2) That women who go to outdoor work, or to fishing, be required to leave their infants in the crèche.
- (3) That some woman belonging to the town be appointed permanent nurse in this establishment, or, failing such an arrangement, that the women take it in turns to remain in the town in charge of the nursery while the others are at work,—two women being left in charge of the house every day. In course of time a number of competent nurses would accrue from the District Medical Officers' hospitals if our suggestion under that head is acted on—*vide* "Native Medical Treatment and Nursing." It would be the duty of the nurse or the women to see that the children are properly fed and cared for in the absence of their parents. The necessary supply of provisions would have to be furnished, as may be arranged by the community. One article necessary in such an institution is milk.

The vegetable substitutes for mother's milk which are available to the Fijians are utterly inadequate. In the butter made by the Tokalau people from the pandanus fruit there may be some virtue; but the particular variety of pandanus from which this butter is obtained does not grow in Fiji. We can, therefore, only speak of its qualities from hearsay, but it might be introduced if thought advisable. So far as we know, however, the only tolerable substitute for mother's milk is the milk of some other animal, and in Fiji our choice is limited to two,—cows and goats.

The Blue Book returns indicate that the horned cattle in the Colony number nearly 10,000, and those owned by Indian immigrants are probably not included in the return. The number of goats is set down at 3,855, but these figures include only the goats of superior breed owned by Europeans. There are, besides, many herds of wild goats in the country. Cattle can be purchased anywhere throughout the Colony for from £2 to £10 per head,—the ordinary price being probably under £4; and goats can be bought for from 3s. to 12s. each. There is thus no scarcity of milk-producing animals in the Colony, and if the natives could be trusted to milk them, they could not do better than provide themselves with cattle. But they could not as yet be trusted to tend cattle. Until they learn to do so, however, they should be induced to buy milk as infants' food. In many districts milk can now be purchased from coolie immigrants. Where this cannot be done the European settlers would no doubt be found willing to sell milk to the natives. At present they are generally willing to supply them with milk gratis, but the natives do not appreciate the kindness of the intention. Although they have a prejudice against the use of milk, natives and Melanesians become fond of milk after some acquaintance with it.

It should, therefore, we think, be enacted that a daily supply of fresh milk should be provided for use in these village crèches. The natives can well afford to pay for the milk, and the necessity for making the payments will probably go further than anything else to induce them to ultimately keep and tend cattle.

Feeding-bottles should not be introduced into the crèches, and the habit common among the natives of allowing a child to drink from a woman's mouth should be forbidden. The children should be fed from a spoon and basin.

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In towns where fresh milk cannot be obtained we think the people should be required to provide tinned milk for use in the crèches. Excellent tinned milk ("Milkmaid" brand) could probably be procured for 8d. per tin or less, and a tin would keep for three days after opening. Inferior brands of tinned milk could be bought cheaper, but we would not recommend their being used.

The maintenance of the crèche would thus cost about 1s. 4d. per week when in use every day.

400. There are, of course, dangers to be encountered in the commencement of such an institution, and especially in the natives' manipulation of the milk supply, whether procured fresh or prepared from preserved milk. But if a short code of rules and instructions, dealing with the management of the crèche and the supply of milk, were drawn up, printed, and exhibited in each crèche, we think that these dangers would be minimised, and in time would disappear. It would be necessary to provide that the crèche should be inspected every day by the *Turaga ni koro*, who should be responsible for the cleanliness of the crèche and its utensils, and for the maintenance of a proper milk supply.

401. In this connection, and with reference to the prevention of the neglect of children generally, we think it desirable that in every town a matron should be elected to have the oversight of mothers and children. These matrons might report to the European police and sanitary officer of the province or to the lady sanitary missionaries, if our proposals under these heads are adopted. If such appointments were made the matron should inspect the crèche daily, instead of the *Turaga ni koro* as recommended above.

402. The institution of the crèche system is in accord with native customs, but the introduction of a milk supply is a new feature. We regard it, however, as an essential alternative to the abandonment of field-labour by nursing-mothers; and we think that opportunity should be taken to discuss and explain the scope of the proposal at the first *Bose Vakaturaga*.

403. The remedies proposed for the prevention of the neglect of children are thus,—

- (1) The provision of punishment for neglect of children—already done by Regulation No. 6 of 1892. The Regulation, however, is of little use without European supervision, as the native authorities do not know what constitutes neglect.
- (2) The institution of inquests on infantile deaths,—provided by Regulation No. 5 of 1892.
- (3) The institution of a Hygienic Mission by European women.
- (4) The institution of Village Crèches, and the supply of milk thereto by the communities—

Purchasing fresh milk from Europeans or Indians, *or*

Using preserved milk, *or*

Providing and tending cows or goats.

- (5) The appointment (by annual election) of a Matron to have oversight of mothers and children, reporting to the European Sanitary Officer of the province or to the Lady Sanitary Missionaries.
- (6) The prevention of field-labour by women for a period of three months after their confinement, the husband being made responsible for the proper supply of food, firewood, and water.

XXVIII.—LACTATION.

Digest of Replies.

404. It is generally recognised by the correspondents that the life of a Fijian child depends almost entirely upon the supply of its mother's milk in ample quantity and of suitable quality during at least the first year of its age. Deficiency of breast-milk, it is said, is a common failing among Fijian mothers; and as the natives know of no adequate substitute, many infants die from this cause alone, a fact shown

by

NEGLECT OF
CHILDREN
BY REASON
OF THE
PARENTS'
WORK AND
ABSENCE
FROM HOME.

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by the Death Registers. It is pointed out that in the polygamous household there were greater facilities for the care of the mother and her child than now exist; and it is stated that in those days the mother was maintained for three months in a separate house, during which time the care of her child devolved upon the three or four women who were detailed to take charge of her. The child continued at the breast until it was two or three years old and was well able to assimilate solid food, and during the whole of that time the mother lived apart from her husband.

In connection with this view, and as a consideration that may have given rise to the institution of polygamy, it is mentioned that,—

“Graminivorous animals suckle their young much longer than carnivorous ones do. That a vegetarian race must and does suckle its children longer than one that eats much meat.”

Notwithstanding this, however, it is remarked that,—

“Nowadays many of the Fijian women bear children as often as is the case among Europeans; and having but poor food, and insufficient quantities of that, have not sufficient strength to bear the double burden of rearing the children and at the same time produce others.”

Stress is also laid on the point that,—

“The food the mother exists on is not of a rich milk-making nature by itself; for, although one may call the Fijians almost a ‘vegetarian’ race, any one can notice the rapid falling off in condition of a native woman (not a chief’s wife) when nursing.”

And that,—

“The food of women, suckling infants, and young children is not sufficiently nourishing to impart the requisite vigour of constitution.”

405. It is further pointed out by the writers that in addition to the dangers arising from deficiency of breast-milk, and the lack of an adequate substitute, the milk of those mothers who have an ample supply is often rendered deleterious to the child through illness or over exertion on the part of the mother, arising out of practices connected with fishing and other outdoor work. When the mother is sick or takes medicine she continues to suckle her child; and it does not occur to a native mother that her milk is disagreeing with her infant (unless she be conscious of rendering it *dabe*) until the internal disorders the milk may have caused terminate fatally.

406. The condition of native life, which requires agricultural work to be performed by women, is believed to materially interfere with the infant’s chances of survival in cases where the nursing-mother engages in field-labour.

In some places, we are told, after the tenth day from the child’s birth the parents will both go to work, taking the infant with them in a basket. In other cases the child will be left at home in the care perhaps of its grandmother or some other relation (*vide* paragraphs 389 and 394). On the other hand the writer of Paper No. 20 says,—

“The custom of keeping the mother and child, after confinement, for a very lengthy period within the house—often, indeed, within a close mosquito-screen, cannot facilitate either the recovery of the mother or the growth of the child.”

407. An incident is cited by one of the correspondents where, although a child was dying of starvation, the maternal affection failed under the strain of walking a hundred yards twice a day in order to procure a supply of cow’s milk. This can only be attributed to insouciance—unhappily the commonest characteristic of the Fijian mother.

In the absence of cow’s or goat’s milk the next natural resource would be the employment of a wet-nurse or foster-mother, but it is pointed out by the correspondents that mothers are averse to suckle infants unrelated to them; and the reason given is a strong one,—that when another woman suckles the child of one who has no milk, the foster-mother has her own child to nourish, and that the supply for each child is consequently diminished, and the chances of survival lessened for both.

It is also stated that there are cases in which no foster-mother can be obtained, and that under these circumstances the Fijian mother can do nothing for her child but watch it pine and die.

408. Four writers make reference to the extended period of lactation that prevails among the natives. One points out that it tends to weaken the mother’s constitution,

constitution, of which the next child feels the effects. Another observes that the custom of suckling a child for three years—sometimes for five or six—is injurious to both mother and child, and is a great preventive of large families; while it is again stated that “the mother often suckles the child until fifteen months old and after the milk is unfit for food purposes.”

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Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

409. Four writers dwell upon the necessity for reforming the diet of nursing-mothers. They believe that it would be of little use to enumerate specific articles of diet to be provided for each confinement, because the dietary differs in the various parts of the Group, but think that the fathers of newly-born children, too often neglectful of their wives, should be compelled to do their duty. One writer states that a *tabu* placed on salt or particular foods by the old women is responsible for the frequently insufficient diet of nursing-mothers. Some stress is laid upon the decline in the use of the cocoanut by nursing-mothers. In practice, it is stated, a woman is not permitted to drink as many nuts as she needs, as either the husband or the native authorities interfere on the ground that the nuts are required for sale or for taxes.

The proposals made with regard to this restriction are,—

- (1) That no *tabu* of cocoanuts should exist for a longer period than three months at one time, unless the special permission of the Governor is first obtained.
- (2) That no person using old nuts for domestic purposes and not for sale, should, after a *tabu* for three months, be liable for a breach of the *tabu*.
- (3) That no *tabu* of nuts should apply to what may be necessary, whether old nuts or drinking nuts, for a woman nursing a child, for a weaning-child, or for an aged or sick person.
- (4) That the *tabu* of cocoanuts should never exceed six months during any year.

The observance of the third of these recommendations has already been enjoined on the *Roko Tui* of all the provinces.

410. A very important suggestion is made to the effect that mothers should be educated—should be aided in attaining a better way, a higher motive, and a purer spirit—by means of a Ladies Sanitary Mission. This suggestion we have dealt with under a specific head.

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411. The first thing administered to the native infant after birth is a small quantity of the juice of the candle-nut tree (*Aleurites Triloba*) which is given for the purpose of making the infant vomit. When that has been accomplished a ripe cocoanut (in some places a plantain) is roasted and chewed and the product is dropped into a cup. Then a piece of native cloth, shaped like a nipple, is dipped into the cup and given to the child to suck. This is done on the first day of its birth. Thereafter, until its mother's breasts are full, it is allowed to suck the breasts of a wet-nurse for a day (or, in the case of a chief's child, for three days), after which it is handed to its mother. The children of chiefs, in the old days, were usually suckled by more than one woman, and mothers of rank still receive similar assistance. The natives appear to be careful that a child shall not suck its mother's first milk, and they are equally careful that the wet-nurse has not been engaged in sea-fishing, and that there is not too great a disparity between the age of her own child and that of the new-born infant.

They admit that the missionaries have endeavoured to discourage the employment of a wet-nurse between the period of the child's birth and that of its being given to its mother to suckle. In Tonga, we learn, the mother suckles the child as soon as the milk comes.

412. We are informed by the native witnesses whom we have examined that the assistance given to the lying-in and nursing mother has not undergone any radical change in modern days.

Among

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Among the common people a custom has been handed down from ancient times, by which two girls from the wife's relations and two from the husband's family are told off to feed and tend the new mother. In some places the custom is for only one female from each of the two families to be set aside for that purpose, and probably the rule is everywhere regulated by considerations of convenience and rank. In addition to this, the mother receives some assistance from her own and her husband's mother if they be alive. These females and the midwife or nurse leave the mother after the tenth day. From that time she is cared for by her husband. It will, in passing, be noted that these conditions fit into the native custom of marrying orthogamous cousins, or relations, or townspeople, and that certain inconveniences naturally arise at the time of a birth in cases where the husband and wife belong to different villages.

413. During the first ten days after the birth the mother's diet is confined to vegetables. She is forbidden to eat what the natives define as *ka damu* (literally red stuff, *i.e.*, shell-fish, fish, or pork, or broths, made therefrom). She is fed on *vakalolo* (pudding), yams, taro, and spinach. As soon as a child is born the relations pull a quantity of taro from which *ba ni dalo* (spinach) is prepared. The value of this article as a nutrient is discussed under the head of "Infant's Food."

At the end of ten days, the mother generally goes about her housework, but in some places, and amongst those who can afford it (which practically means those whose relations or husbands have sufficient interest in them), the mother does not go to any outdoor work for about three months. The native name of this period is the *bogi drau*=(100 days). After that time she goes about her ordinary avocations. But we are informed that in some places as a rule, and in many instances as a fact, the woman begins her ordinary work between the fifth and the tenth day, and that this frequently results in illness ending in her death, which, in at least three cases out of four, involves the death of her child also.

414. The only portion of their ordinary work from which women abstain during the period of suckling is that of sea-fishing. They firmly believe that fishing in the sea will damage their milk. They say "there is '*dabe*' in the sea, and, if the mother goes into the salt water over the calf of her leg, her milk will be spoiled."

Some of the correspondents, however, speak of the evils arising from fishing by suckling-mothers, from which we conclude that this abstention may not be universal.

415. It is pointed out that deficiency of breast-milk is a common circumstance to which Fijian infants are exposed, and that many die from the drying up of the mother's milk, (*maca na mena sucu*.) or from *lodo i sucu*. The native witnesses whom we examined gave three definitions of the expression "*lodo i sucu*," viz., "Inanition,"—

- (1) When the mother dies and the child is prematurely weaned ; *al*
- (2) When the mother goes to work and suckles her child only occasionally ;
- (3) When the mother has plenty of milk and neglects to give it to the child.

Part of the infant mortality from defective lactation would thus appear to be owing to the physical inability of the mother to provide the lacteal secretion, and part owing to her pre-occupation and neglect; and we incline to think that cases of drying up of the mother's milk would be much less frequent if the duties of lactation were performed in a more regular and less casual manner, and suffered less interruption from the calls of other work.

It will be readily understood that when a mother has no supply of milk she takes all the steps that she believes possible to induce the secretion. Her breasts are oiled, and steamed, and painted with turmeric, and kept warm by binding in *masi*, while she eats spinach, *ba vakoro* (a mixture of spinach with shell-fish), fish, and shell-fish, and drinks fish soup, shell-fish soup and spinach water. A very favourite remedy for deficient secretion of milk appears to be *yagona*. It is drunk during pregnancy to produce easy labour, and is said to cause a flow of milk in many cases when fish soup and other means fail.—(See remarks under "Abuse of *Yagona* and

and Tobacco," paragraphs 306—314.) If these means produce no result, the child is fed on spinach water (see "Infant's Food," paragraph 441), chewed yam, the half-formed albumen of young cocoanuts, &c.; but, we were informed, the first epidemic or sickness generally carries off children who are brought up in this way.

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In connection with the efforts made to establish a flow of milk, we are of opinion that the stimulant in the shape of more nutritious diet, on which the mother at first depends, is not continued throughout the whole period of lactation but ceases when the flow is established. Any subsequent efforts appear more directed towards maintaining a flow of fluid than to creating milk of good quality. We do not gather that any particular care is taken to supply the suckling-mother with food of a more than ordinarily nutritious character; and one of the correspondents complains that during the suckling period the mother is allowed to eat unripe fruit and other unsuitable fare.

We were informed that in Tonga, on the other hand, the children do not often die in cases where the mother's supply of milk is deficient. Children are there brought up on a mixture of cocoanut-milk and breadfruit made liquid; and an instance was cited of a child that had been brought up on sugar-cane. In the pap made in Fiji, water is generally used to mix with the yam, &c., instead of cocoanut-milk, although the latter is of high nutritive value.

It also appears that in the Gilbert Group, Tokalau infants who have to be prematurely weaned are fed on a butter made from the fresh fruit of the pandanus (not, however, the pandanus common in Fiji), which is prepared daily, the surplus being thrown away at night. These infants also suck young cocoanuts, through the top of which a hollow rush has been inserted. The practice of using the young cocoanut in this way is much less common in Fiji than might have been expected.

A witness, from Cakaudrove, informs us that in many cases after the death of a mother another woman who is not nursing takes her place. She is given spinach water to drink, and is oiled and tended like the real mother, and in course of time, when the child continues to suck her breasts the milk comes. In this way we are told the child is sometimes reared. We have been informed of a case—and it is affirmed that it is by no means a solitary instance,—in which the grandmother suckled her daughter's children during the latter's absence, which appears, probably as a consequence, to have been of frequent occurrence. The mother of the children was the grandmother's youngest child, but the grandmother appears to have been able to induce a flow of milk during the lactation of each of her daughter's four children. We imagine that the milk would have little nutritive value, and were not surprised to learn that none of the four children in question survived infancy.

416. We are informed by the native witnesses, however, that, as a rule, when a mother dies, great difficulty is experienced in obtaining a supply of milk for her infant. If it be the child of a chief it will be tended and probably reared, but the child of a commoner is almost sure to fall a victim to neglect. At first its grandmother or some friend will carry it from house to house and beg nursing-mothers to give it suck. Many, we are told, will refuse to do so, or will make excuses. Even the child's aunt will sometimes refuse lest her own infant should suffer. No one besides the child's father or grandmothers will look after it of their own accord, although they may render assistance when asked to do so.

We are convinced from statistics obtained that, in at least three cases out of every four, the death of a mother means the death of the child also, and we incline to think that the mortality is only a shade lower in cases where the mother has a deficient supply of breast-milk.

417. The absence of the father from home during the lactation of the infant is without doubt also a particularly fatal condition. It is tacitly understood that the relations of the mother will assist her, but, if she is physically able to fetch her own food from the plantations, the assistance given her is of the most nominal kind. The child is then liable to suffer either when left at home or when taken by its mother to the food plantations. There is no reason for the absence of husbands from home at such times. Married men are not allowed by law to go to labour on the plantations
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of Europeans, and they ought to be excused from any communal work that will entail their absence.

418. With reference to the extended period of suckling, to which four of the correspondents refer, we believe that most Fijian children (except in Colo) are weaned when they are between nine and eighteen months of age, or when three or four upper and three or four lower incisors have come.

Theoretically a child is not supposed to be weaned until all its teeth come. One of the native witnesses pointed out that if a child is weaned before then it will probably stop eating for a time whenever a tooth is coming through the gum.

The conditions that determine a Fijian mother to wean her child are generally,—

- (1) The child is furnished with teeth and can run about and eat.
- (2) The mother's milk has become deficient in quantity.
- (3) The child refuses the breast.
- (4) The mother wishes to engage in fishing or some particular piece of work.
- (5) The mother has cohabited again.
- (6) She has again become pregnant.
- (7) She has given birth to another child.

Many Fijian mothers, we are told, wean their children earlier than was formerly the custom. This fashion, it is said, was introduced by teacher's wives who had been in the service of Europeans.

As a rule, native children have for some time previous to weaning been accustomed to eat what the natives call "real food," *i.e.*, yams, taro, &c. When weaned in the ordinary way they are at once given the common native diet with the exception perhaps of shell-fish and such things as might be considered dangerous. When they have to be weaned suddenly in consequence of the fear of *dabe*, or from some similar cause, they are fed at first on spinach, mashed yam, and chewed food.

The witnesses agreed that children usually became sickly after being weaned, and that, if prematurely weaned, they often suffer from fever and bowel diseases; but, when the child has for some time before weaning been accustomed to partake of ordinary native food, this difficulty does not seem to arise. We can well believe, however, that yam chewed by a woman who has been smoking tobacco is not the most wholesome food for a prematurely weaned child.

419. There was a consensus of opinion on the part of the native witnesses to the effect that the majority of Fijian women menstruate while suckling, and that in many cases the catamenia returns three months after the birth of the infant. In many other parts of the world it is popularly believed that suckling prevents conception, and children are suckled for sometimes two years or longer in the hope of delaying a second conception. In Fiji, however, it does not appear that conception is generally prevented in this way, but rather that conception intervenes during lactation and dries up the supply of milk. To the native mind this contingency, commonly called *dabe*,—*i.e.*, the cohabitation of the parents during the suckling period,—is the main danger of lactation. This subject is dealt with under the specific head of "*Dabe*."

420. Another factor in impairing the quality of the mother's milk may lie in their habit of tobacco-smoking. Most mothers forego the use of tobacco for the first ten days after child-birth, but many again take to it when that period has expired. Some of them give up the practice until the child can crawl, but we fear that such self-denial is rare. We have recommended, at paragraph 319 hereof, that the use of tobacco by suckling-mothers should be prevented.

421. Another danger to the unweaned child arises from the proneness of mothers to dose themselves with herbal infusions. When a native mother has thus taken medicine it never occurs to her that the sucking child may be affected by it. A chief of Macuata, whom we examined, was firmly of opinion that in his province many infants were killed through their mothers taking medicines to prevent a second conception.

422. The difficulties connected with lactation of native children may be summarised as,—

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- (1) Absence of breast-milk in certain cases owing to the death or idiosyncrasy of the mothers.
- (2) Deficiency of breast-milk.
- (3) Its unsuitability owing to conditions affecting the mother.
- (4) Its general low quality as a nutrient, owing to the unsuitability of the mothers' diet.
- (5) Drying up or weakening of breast-milk owing to—
 - (a) Work of mothers ;
 - (b) Irregularity of suckling (probably consequent on work) ;
 - (c) Conception (partly consequent, perhaps, on irregularity of suckling).
- (6) The absence of any suitable substitute for breast-milk, and the difficulty of procuring a suitable infant's food where the child has to be suddenly or prematurely weaned, or when it requires more nutriment than its mother's milk affords.

423. The remedies which we think applicable to the difficulties connected with the lactation of Fijian infants, may be briefly summarised as follows :—

- (1) Discourage the administration of the usual emetic after birth, and the wet-nursing of infants between the time of their birth and that of their being given to the mother to suckle. Encourage the people to allow infants to suckle their mother's first milk, which is a natural aperient.
- (2) Continue the supply of good food to the mother, such as she at first receives, during the whole period of lactation.
- (3) Aim at relieving nursing-women of the necessity of performing outdoor labour, and insist on their suckling their infants with more regularity. In any case women should not be allowed to go to outdoor labour for three months after their confinement, and during that time the husband should provide a proper supply of food, firewood, and water. When women go to work or to fishing after that period their children should be left in the village crèche,—a proposal which we advocate at paragraph 399 hereof.
- (4) Institute a monthly meeting of married women to discuss matters relating to the health of children.
- (5) Popularise the use of milk or of a suitable "infants food" as suggested under that head.
- (6) Provided that no *tabu* on cocoanuts shall apply to such as may be required by the owners for food purposes either at the drinking stage or when ripe.

These remedies would be strengthened by the adoption of our further recommendations relative to,—

Ladies' Sanitary Mission ;
Model Settlements ;
Concentration of Villages.

XXIX.—COHABITATION OF THE PARENTS DURING THE SUCKLING PERIOD. (*Dabe*.)

Digest of Replies.

424. Thirteen correspondents allude to the ancient custom of separating the husband and wife until the child is weaned. In generally attributing the decay of this custom to the abolition of polygamy they forget that owing to the deficiency of women the bulk of the people had to be satisfied with but one wife. Four writers speak of the fixed belief of the Fijians that incontinence impairs the quality of the mother's milk. One of these, a very old resident, remarks that while native children do certainly seem to suffer from *dabe*, the offspring of native women by Europeans are

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are not so affected. Another, while supporting this statement, attributes the difference to the better food and care bestowed by a white man on his native wife.

One correspondent, a missionary, dismisses the belief in the efficacy of abstinence with scant respect as an "absurd and superstitious practice." Only one writer (Paper No. 49) assigns what seems to us to be the true reason for the belief. He says,—

"Months before her infant can safely dispense with her breast, it dries up from a second conception having taken place; and, unless she takes measures either to prevent this occurring, or to substitute suitable food for the lost natural nourishment, her infant must die."

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425. The Fijian word *dabe* has been somewhat loosely applied to the custom of separating the parents of a child during the period of suckling. After careful examination of competent witnesses we find that the word *dabe* is an adjective signifying the injury sustained by a child whose parents have cohabited too soon after its birth. It becomes *dabe* and exhibits symptoms of attenuation accompanied with enlarged abdomen and general debility. The infringement of the rule of abstinence is sometimes called at Bau "*quru vou*," but the literal meaning of this phrase, and the want of gravity displayed by the witnesses when they supplied it, warrant the belief that it is in the nature of a slang expression.

426. Native witnesses old enough to remember the customs of ancient times state that a child was suckled for a period varying from twelve to thirty-six months—in rare cases longer. During this period the mother refrained from cohabitation owing to the fear, partly of impoverishing her milk, and partly of again becoming pregnant before her child was weaned. So long as the village *bure ni sa* existed and the husband and wife lived in different houses, each under the surveillance of persons of their own sex, secret cohabitation was impracticable. It was made still less possible by the custom of young mothers of leaving their husband's house and going to live with their relations for a year after the birth of a child; but since the *bure* system has been abandoned, and an imitation of European family life substituted for it, husband and wife no longer separate during the period of lactation, but, as it were, give their parole to public opinion to preserve the abstinence prescribed by ancient custom. The health of the child is jealously watched by the other villagers for signs that the parents have failed in their duty. If it fall off in condition it is declared to be *dabe*, and the mother is compelled to wean it immediately, with an effect upon the child that varies with its age. If it suffer, it is said to be *kali dole* (prematurely weaned).

427. The Fijians have no artificial food for their infants, who must therefore be suckled until old enough to digest solid vegetable diet. But menstruation is not infrequently re-established in Fijian women at the third month after parturition; and cohabitation even at this early stage will, in such cases, often result in a second pregnancy. The mother is physiologically incapable of nourishing the foetus within her and the child at her breast as well, and the symptoms of defective nutrition become evident very soon after the new conception has taken place. Unless the child be weaned without delay it will become too weak to undergo the strain of a change of diet: it will become a *gone dabe*.

It was asserted by one native witness that the children of men of mature age are less often *dabe* than those of young fathers, because the older father, being less ardent, does not seek to break through the rule of abstinence.

Some curious superstitions cling round the custom. In Namosi, where lactation was, as a rule, continued for three years, a belief prevails that when a man, thus separated from his wife, has an intrigue with another woman, his child will fall sick and show the symptoms of *dabe*. The sickness that attacks the child is there called by the suggestive name *vei sagani tani* (lit: alien thigh-locking).* Natives also

* In discussing this belief as one of the indications of the existence of "*couvade*" Starke quotes from Dobizhoffer's remarks upon the Abipones: "They comply with this custom with the greater readiness because they believe that the father's rest and abstinence have an extraordinary effect on the wellbeing of new-born infants, and is, indeed, absolutely necessary for them. . . . For they are quite convinced that any unseemly act on the father's part would injuriously affect the child on account of the sympathetic tie which naturally subsists between them, so that in the event of the child's death the women all blame the self-indulgence of the father, and find fault with this or that act."

also think that the receding of yaws—the only dreaded contingency in connection with the disease—is generally due to *dabe*.

428. The feeling of the most intelligent natives is that cohabitation should be abstained from for a whole year after the birth of a child. Fijian women have shown themselves to lack the stamina necessary for bearing healthy children in rapid succession. Whether this proceed from inherent physical incapacity, or from improper or insufficient food, or from a combination of these conditions, will always be a matter for conjecture. Nearly one-half of the children die within a year of their birth. In many cases the death is caused by a second conception having taken place; but even when the child has not been *dabe*'d its death makes room for a second conception, thus swelling the birth-rate but impoverishing the physical strength of the mother and of her subsequent offspring. When the husband adheres to the prescribed period of abstinence, there is no probability of a second conception taking place, and there is consequently a far higher chance of the child's survival, and a possibility of the mother's forces being in some degree recuperated before she is called on to renew her maternal functions. If this state of things were general, it would lower the birth-rate, but would increase the population. The high birth-rate is thus, to some extent, a consequence of the high death-rate.

Until, therefore, the Fijians adopt the use of milk or other adventitious food for infants, the separation of the parents for a protracted period is not only salutary but actually necessary; and the opinion of the natives, disregarded as often as expressed, that the decay of this custom of sexual abstinence is a grave cause of infant mortality, would seem to be founded upon sound truth.

429. In Tonga and in the Gilbert Islands the separation is rigidly enforced. In the latter group *dabe* is called *E gori*. The parents of the woman exercise extreme vigilance to prevent the couple cohabiting. The husband who infringes the custom is scolded by the relations of his wife who separate him from her and send him to sleep with the young men.

Lieut. Matthews who visited the Sierra Leone River and the adjoining coast, between 1785 and 1791, writes concerning the Mandingoes: "Mothers never wean their children till they are able to walk and carry a calabash of water, which they are instructed to do as soon as possible; as cohabitation is denied to them while they have a child at the breast."

In Japan, where artificial food for infants is available, prolonged lactation is still practised. An eminent writer, second to none in his knowledge of the country, says,—

"Japan is of all countries, except England, that wherein the fewest children die between birth and the age of five years, albeit another point in favour of Japanese babies is that they are nursed at the breast until they are two, or even three years old."*

Nature intended the human mother to suckle her offspring until it had developed the teeth necessary for the mastication of solid food, and did not design her body for undergoing the strain of a second gestation until its forces had been restored by a period of rest. Civilisation, tending ever to drive Nature at high pressure, has adopted the use of artificial food for infants, so as to leave the mother free to bear the stress of a second maternity. But, to meet the increased strain, the civilised mother is nourished and tended with a care that is never bestowed upon her savage sister. Barbarism followed the laws of Nature, and was assisted therein by the practice of polygamy and the custom of mutual abstinence. The mutilated barbarism of the Fijians has lost these aids to obey Nature's laws, has not yet attained to the conveniences of civilisation, and has therefore to do the high-pressure work of the latter without the assistance derived from either state. The reproductive powers of the Fijian woman of to-day are being forced, while her body is no better prepared by a more generous diet to meet the strain than when she was allowed to follow the less exacting course of nature for which, only, her body as at present nourished is fitted. In these days, also, the breaking down of the custom of abstinence has induced natives to seek a prophylactic against the occurrence

COHABITA-
TION OF THE
PARENTS
DURING THE
SUCKLING
PERIOD.
(*Dabe*.)

Minute by the
Commission.

* "Some Pictures from Japan."—Sir Edwin Arnold.

COHABITA-
TION OF THE
PARENTS
DURING THE
SUCKLING
PERIOD.
(*Dabe.*)

Minute by the
Commission.

occurrence of *dabe*. Nursing-mothers, it is said, drink herbs to prevent a second conception, and these decoctions, it is believed, often fatally affect the child at the breast.

430. The relaxation of the custom of abstinence is said to be the result of the endeavours of the early missionaries to introduce the European form of family life among the natives; and the strong disapproval of the custom expressed by the writer of Paper No. 64 tends to show that some missionaries still regard the isolation of nursing-mothers as "absurd and superstitious." If this be so, it is to be regretted that two salient points of difference between European and Fijian society—the irregular and insufficient nourishment of the women, and the lack of suitable alternative food for infants—did not engage the efforts of the reformers before they discouraged a custom so admirably adapted to minimise the evils of a lack of cereals and of milk-yielding animals.

431. But retrogression is now impossible. It would be as impracticable to enforce the habit of mutual abstinence during lactation as it would be to reimplant in the native mind the fear of physical injury by the unseen Powers as a punishment for the broken *tabu*. The only feasible remedy is an improvement in the nutrition of the nursing-mother and the introduction of the use of milk from the lower animals as an auxiliary diet for infants.

INADEQUATE
CARE ABOUT
THE PERIOD
OF
DENTITION.

Digest of
Replies to
Circular.

Minute by the
Commission.

XXX.—INADEQUATE CARE ABOUT THE PERIOD OF DENTITION.

Digest of Replies.

432. Two writers refer to the dangers of teething and the entire absence of special care on the part of the parents during the process of dentition, laying special stress on inadequacy or unsuitability of diet. A medical correspondent writes,—

"Fijian children rarely suffer difficulty or danger in cutting their teeth, and natives do not as a rule recognise dentition as a cause of illness."

Minute by the Commission.

433. Fijian children appear to suffer little pain or constitutional disturbance from teething. An opinion to this effect has been given in Reply No. 61; and we have taken separate evidence in the course of our inquiries on this point, the sum of which concurs in the main with that view. We have also examined a large number of Death Inquiry Reports, containing the evidence taken during investigations held by Native magistrates into the death of infants, and we do not find that such deaths are of more frequent occurrence during the ordinary time of teething than at other stages in the first and most fatal of years. Natives do not seem to be accurate observers in such matters; they are prone to accept gossip as facts. We specially examined five native women of high rank and intelligence on the subject of dentition, besides two midwives from the interior. They all, excepting one, supported the belief, common in Fiji, that the order of eruption of the teeth is dependent upon sex. That one stated that such was certainly the common belief, but that she herself had failed to substantiate it. She, of them all, however, was the one possessing the widest knowledge of Europeans, and the strongest sympathies with our methods. Of the two midwives one asserted that the upper incisors appear first in boys, and the lower incisors first in girls, while the other declared that boys cut their lower incisors first and girls their upper ones. Of the remaining four witnesses, two stated the one thing and the other two the converse. We gather from this that the observations of the natives on dentition are shallow and transient, and that they easily believe any plausible story when once set afloat.

434. Convulsions are rarely mentioned by native mothers; and there is no word in the language precisely expressing the condition.

A high temperature, with bowel disturbances, is said to occur sometimes in Fijian infants while teething, and it would be remarkable if it were not so; but native mothers do not regard the dentition period as fraught with any special danger,
nor

nor as demanding any unusual care on account of that function;* and the lancing of gums is quite unknown in the domain of their surgery. It is probable that the long period of lactation formerly prevalent made dentition easy. The period of lactation was dependent on dentition; and one of our witnesses gave as a reason for extended lactation the fact that, if a child were weaned before its teeth came, it would stop eating whenever a tooth was coming through the gum. Europeans are too apt to consider teething in the light of a morbid process, and to ascribe all sorts of ills arising out of accident or careless nursing to its account. A great authority on tropical hygiene observes that under ordinary care in diet and clothing, the operation of teething proceeds kindly in the climate of India; and adds, speaking from his own experience, that "severe teething irritation is seldom a primary affection, but, on the contrary, generally follows upon previously existing gastric, intestinal, or febrile disorder; and it is not too much to say that in eighteen cases out of twenty these last are but the results of mismanagement in diet and clothing—errors of ignorance and weakness more common to the most civilised than to the most barbarous communities."† At the same time we are of opinion that the teething of European infants in Fiji is accompanied with more difficulties and dangers than in a temperate country. We do not, however, think that such degree of nervous susceptibility as Fijian children possess is much awakened even by dentition, except when improper feeding, want of rest, breathing of polluted air, and exposure, are present to aggravate matters. One consequence of easy teething is that the child is more likely to be prematurely weaned, or to be given unsuitable food at a critical time, than would be the case if the illnesses incident to teething were more pronounced and better recognised. The relaxation in the ancient custom of long suckling, which is gradually taking place, renders this risk greater now than it formerly was, and the combination of these circumstances may easily account for an increase in the mortality of infants in the first year of life.

We have never met with a case of illness caused by the second dentition, but severe local troubles in cutting the wisdom teeth are not uncommon in Fijian youths.

435. The occurrence of yaws during the first dentition is of course an element of danger, and it seems not improbable that some of the vagaries that distinguish that disorder, and cause native parents especial concern, may be attributable to constitutional influences in connection with the development and eruption of the milk-teeth.

436. Improvements in the direction of increased attention to infants, better care and nutrition of suckling-mothers, the provision of a suitable substitute for breast-milk where the maternal supply fails, and the adoption of measures for the suppression of yaws, will remove such dangers incident to dentition as affect native infants.

XXXI.—INFANTS' FOOD.

Digest of Replies.

437. Fourteen of the sixty-five correspondents speak of defective infant dietary as a cause of the mortality. One of these states his belief that,—

"While a good many children, from constitutional weakness, would never have survived at all, by far the larger portion—fully 75 per cent.—have been fairly starved to death, and this state of things has been brought about by the physical inability, ignorance, and apathy, of one or both parents."

He further points out that among the vegetarian peasantry of Europe, as among the graminivorous mammalia, the suckling period is prolonged by the mother until the offspring can assimilate solid food.

The various views of the other lay writers may be summarised as follows:—

- (1) Infants at the breast have no suitable food except their mothers' milk, which is not at all times wholesome for them.

(2)

* Crawford, writing of the Javanese and Malays, remarks: "We are surprised to find the Indian Islanders wholly unaware that teething is the cause of disease in infants. This may possibly in some measure be owing to their own want of observation, but more likely in a great degree to the extraordinary mildness of the symptoms of dentition in their climate." Vol. i, p. 35.

† "Influence of Tropical Climate;" by Sir R. Martin, C.B., F.R.S.

- (2) If the mother's milk-supply fails the child is given vegetable pulps of a more or less unwholesome nature.
- (3) The children of Indian coolies, though reared under less favourable surroundings, thrive and increase owing to their diet of milk and flour.
- (4) Children having no suitable food after they are weaned, are allowed to gnaw and eat anything that may fall in their way.
- (5) The habit of women who smoke strong tobacco chewing the food for the children must have a deleterious effect.

A medical writer upon this point says, "Diseases of the digestive system may be confidently said to be brought about in great measure by defective nutrition. This in its turn arises from the use of unsuitable food; or of food which, though originally suitable, has suffered partial decomposition, or been otherwise spoiled. With the native race the latter often occurs through insufficient, uncleanly, or ill-devised cooking." In the case of an epidemic of dysentery among the children of a certain native village, this writer found that the sufferers were being fed upon small oysters and land crabs. Upon proper treatment being adopted they rapidly recovered. He further remarks that, "The children begin when very young to eat insects, indigestible roots, and unripe fruit, and their distended stomachs show that they overeat themselves when they can. It is, in fact," he says, "either a feast or a famine with them."

The same writer believes that in a race so strongly tainted with struma as the Fijians, breast-milk must be seriously affected by the bodily state of the mother.

The obvious remedy for this state of things is indicated by most of the writers. Fijian women must be better nourished, and must be taught the importance of providing suitable food at the time of weaning.

438. The suggestions with regard to providing a substitute for breast-milk are,—

- (1) That natives should purchase and learn to tend cows (the Indian *Bhail* is suggested as a manageable breed).
- (2) That herds of goats should be kept for milking purposes.
Many difficulties are pointed out as in the way of either of these expedients. Natives, it is said, cannot manage cattle, and both cattle and goats would do much damage to their crops; while their lack of cleanliness in regard to utensils would render the milk useless.
- (3) That the provision and use of arrowroot be encouraged; but we think its nutritive value—which is very slight—has been over-estimated.
- (4) That the prevailing custom of placing a *tabu* on cocoanuts for tax purposes should be modified, so that cocoanuts should be available to suckling-mothers and children.
- (5) That the farinaceous and milk diet which is in vogue for such purposes among Europeans should be popularised.

One correspondent is of opinion that time will work its own remedy now that Fijians have taken to copying the ways of Europeans; and another believes that the lack of a suitable infant's food is a deficiency that cannot be cured.

It is also suggested that at each monthly Bulship meeting, the chief of each village should be required to answer the question, "Are the children of your village properly cared for?" As a rule these questions are replied to in such a general way that we have not much faith in their efficacy as a spur to duty, but the question would at least serve to indicate the responsibility.

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439. The subject of providing a suitable infants' food has a threefold aspect,—

- (1) It is desirable that children who have been weaned, after being suckled for a year or eighteen months, should be provided with some more nutritious food than chewed yam and similar vegetable substitutes for its mother's milk.

- (2) It is necessary that increased attention should be given to the feeding and care of infants who have been left at home by their mothers on going to work in the food plantations, or to fish. These infants, we think, should be taken care of in the village crèches under the system suggested at paragraph 399 hereof.
- (3) But particular attention should be directed to providing an infants' food available for cases where from absence or deficiency of breast-milk the mother is unable to suckle her infant; for it must be remembered that 37 per cent. of the total number of Native deaths are deaths of infants under one year of age, and there is reason to believe, that a very large proportion of these deaths arise from deficient nourishment.

440. Fijian infants are usually suckled until three or four of the lower and three or four of the upper incisors appear; but in many cases a deficiency of breast-milk occurs, or some other circumstance intervenes to shorten the suckling period.

When a child has been prematurely weaned, or when its mother is ill and unable to suckle it, it is fed on *ba* water (described hereafter) and, in some places, is also given to suck the half-formed albumen of the young cocoanut. Small green cocoanuts are occasionally given to the child to suck,—the nut being pierced and its top roughly formed in the shape of a nipple, but this custom is much less general than might be expected. When a child's teeth begin to appear its mother will boil slices of yam and mash them into a slushy mess which the child can drink, and when a child is weaned after having been suckled for the full time it has thus generally acquired the habit of eating a little native food.

In both cases, but especially in the case of premature weaning, the child is largely fed on food chewed for it by its mother, or by its relations when it is left in their charge during its mother's absence at the plantations.

Natives remark that children exhibit passing ailments, such as diarrhoea and feverishness, when they are weaned, but the people do not regard these ailments as serious in cases where the child has been suckled for the full term. It is otherwise when the child has been prematurely weaned, and it is observed that as a rule such children fall victims to the first sickness that attacks them.

441. Finding *ba* or *dalo* stalks to form so generally the staple food of native infants when breast-milk is not procurable, we have thought it desirable to ascertain, as nearly as may be, the composition and nutritive value of the preparation. We, therefore, had an average sample of this food made in native fashion and, with the assistance of Dr. Raymund Zimmer, of the Medical Department, submitted it to analysis.

Dalo, is an araceous plant in common use as a food throughout the volcanically formed islands of the Pacific Ocean. Botanically it is the *Caladium Esculentum*. The principal part of it is the root or corm, which affords a much esteemed starchy and glutinous diet of greater alimentary value than the yam. The leaves are used as spinach, and, when boiled, closely resemble that vegetable, both in flavour and appearance. The petioles, or leaf-stalks, are the part chiefly employed for an invalid diet, and, in emergencies, for the sustenance of infants. They are given boiled, and, so prepared, are usually spoken of as *ba*.

The analysis showed that this *ba* contains much glucose, a moderate quantity of starch, a trace of albumen, some malic acid, a pinkish or pale violet colouring matter intensified by acids, water, and cellulose, but no tannic or gallic acids. The microscope showed it to be free from oxalate of lime or other raphides. But there is in the uncooked *dalo* stalk, as well as in the corm itself, and the leaves, a highly acrid oily principle, which, however, is completely dissipated by heat, even considerably below the boiling point of water. On the whole *ba* may be said to resemble boiled beet stalks or rhubarb, differing, however, from the last in being free from chrysophanic acid and oxalate of lime. We can readily believe that the sweet and mucilaginous liquor strained from a mass of well-boiled *ba* offers a not unpalatable, and partially satisfying, food to a native infant whose appetite has either been rendered capricious through illness or has been whetted by absence or insufficiency of breast-milk. But easy assimilable as this diet appears to be, it cannot be regarded

as

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as a nutritive equivalent for mother's milk. It would doubtless be better, though still deficient in proteids, if the strainings of grated cocoanut were added to it, and a little of the boiled *dalo* root itself pounded into an emulsion with it for the sake of its gluten.

The Fijians do not compound a drink with these additions; but they give infants, while being weaned, *dalo* and yam chewed in addition to *ba*; and the child soon learns to pick up all sorts of food, good or bad, without hindrance from its parents.

442. A number of correspondents have taken strong exception to the practice adopted by women of chewing the food to be given to infants.

The human mouth is well known to be a hot-bed of bacteria of various kinds, and it is probable that some of them which are innocuous to the adult may by proliferation become hurtful to the infant. The Fijian uses no tooth-brush but his index finger and this member is not always as clean as the mouth it is intended to expurgate. It is therefore possible that fermentative action leading to diarrhœa in the infant may be initiated during this chewing process. It may even be the case that germs capable of producing specific constitutional disease sometimes thus gain access to the body of the child. Tuberculosis and leprosy are perhaps the diseases of all others which, in the present state of our knowledge concerning them, appear likely to be transmissible in this manner, and the Fijians are largely affected by both tubercle and leprosy. The residuum of tobacco smoke would not improve food prepared in this way, and might even poison it.

On the other hand none of the writers have taken into account the digestive action of the maternal saliva on such amylaceous material as yam and *dalo*; but we believe this is so important as to warrant special notice. If the weaning has been premature the infant is not old enough to duly assimilate any food but milk. The supply of the mother's milk is by some accident cut off and the native nurse has no animal substitute for it. She falls back upon a starchy article as the next best thing, albeit the infant has not yet reached the age at which its organs have acquired the power of digesting such food either easily or completely or with safety. The saliva of man is rich in ptyalin, a principle which does not act upon proteids or fats, and is therefore not secreted by the breast-fed infant in any appreciable quantity during the first year of normal life. As starch is insoluble, it becomes necessary that it should be chemically converted into some more assimilable substance before it can be absorbed by the glands of the stomach and intestine for the nutrition of the tissues. The acidity of the gastric juice would retard this conversion. For these reasons, among others, the saliva appears to have been provided; for the ptyalin contained in it has the property, like the diastase of malt, of converting moistened starch, where kept at a warm and even temperature such as that of the body, into dextrin and glucose,—substances which are easily soluble and capable of being absorbed from the alimentary canal. Thus, while, in such cases, the native woman hurries on a diet which the infant's secretory powers have not yet prepared it to deal with, she aids these powers by supplying from her own mouth the necessary moisture, warmth, and ptyalin for its conversion and solution. We would argue, therefore, that chewed yam and *dalo*, for an infant whose milk supply has been cut off, is better than mashed yam and *dalo* under the same circumstances,—a benefit modified, however, by the risk of tuberculosis, leprosy, and certain forms of diarrhœa. But the mashed yam and *dalo* would ~~also~~ furnish the risk of certain other forms of diarrhœa, from their being indigestible.

443. The Line Islanders make an infant's food from the fresh fruit of the pandanus. It is described as a butter-like preparation; and as it will not keep fresh for more than a day it has to be prepared every morning. When Tokalau infants cannot be suckled they are brought up on this preparation and the juice of the young cocoanut. The particular species of pandanus from which this butter is made does not exist in Fiji, but it could readily be introduced if thought worthy of being utilised. When the children are nearly old enough to be weaned, Tokalaus also feed them on small boneless fish; and, when a little older, on cake made from the fruit of the pandanus tree.

444. On the whole, however, we think that the easiest form of safe and nutritious food for native children after suckling would be pap. There is no reason why Fijians should not buy flour, though it might be difficult to introduce the custom. Any European neighbour would show them how to prepare porridge from flour; and with milk or *lolo*, or sugar, a nutritious diet for infants would be obtained.

445. While therefore we think pap or porridge made of flour, and sweetened with sugar and milk, would be a far better food for weaned children than the pabulum now administered to them, we are of opinion that, as a food for prematurely weaned infants, we must fall back upon the adoption of cows' or goats' milk, which is the only adequate substitute for the milk of the human mother.

But the change from a primitive agricultural to a pastoral life on the part of native communities, which the keeping of cattle would entail, is hardly to be looked for in one generation. Still, as we have shown at paragraph 399, when dealing with the subject of village crèches, there is no lack of milk-producing animals in the Colony; and it is a notorious fact that cattle thrive uncommonly well throughout the islands. A few native chiefs have small herds of cattle which are kept as pets or as provision for *solevus*. They receive little attention as a rule, but we have heard of cases where they provided a small supply of milk for the meals of the chief and his visitors. The ordinary native's idea of rearing cattle—generally limited to a young bull brought up to be killed at a feast—is to let them stray about as pigs do, and they then do great damage to local food crops. We think, however, that in the Model Settlements, if our proposals under that head are adopted, the natives could be taught to tend and milk cattle. This should also form part of the instruction at the native Technical School.

But we believe that the result will be more readily attained by insisting on the provision of milk, in either a fresh or a preserved form, for the village crèches, and for all cases where the mother's milk supply is deficient. We incline to think that, if the people are required to provide milk in such cases, it will be done, notwithstanding the prevailing insouciance. Fijians do not appreciate what they receive for nothing. But if they have to purchase milk—and the chiefs should be responsible for seeing that this is done—they will not be slow to observe the benefit obtainable from the possession of cattle; and when a native has once grasped that fact he may be left to discover the best means of obtaining and keeping and tending the animals.

446. We would recommend that strong efforts should be made to encourage natives in the use of milk and flour. Milk should form the staple diet of prematurely weaned children, and of those left behind in the village crèches, while both flour and milk should be used for infants who had been suckled for the full term.

We think it should be made perfectly clear that no *tabu* on cocoanuts should under any circumstances extend to such nuts as may be required for food or drink by nursing-mothers and young children.

We are also of opinion that the adoption of our more general recommendations as to the Concentration of Villages, the Institution of a Hygienic Mission by European Women, and the Establishment of Model Villages, would contribute to the initiation of the desired reforms in the matter of infants' food.

XXXII.—BOWEL DISEASES.

Digest of Replies.

BOWEL DISEASES.

Digest of Replies to Circular.

447. Attention is called by seven writers to the preponderance of diseases of the bowels among the causes assigned for the deaths of both adults and infants. Under this classification are included dysentery, diarrhoea, thrush, and all diseases of the digestive system. The prevalence of these diseases is to be accounted for by the bad drinking-water in use in native villages, bad food, bad air, and, perhaps, also, one writer adds, by unhealthy emanations from the soil due to improper surface drainage. Even if pure water is obtainable, it is kept in dirty vessels of bamboo or pottery.

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pottery. A native writer, however, believes that these diseases in children are caused by the mothers taking them to bathe too early in the morning.

Another correspondent remarks that when children are attacked by dysentery or diarrhoea the parents can do nothing for them, knowing nothing of the use of the warm bath, and lacking the means of applying it.

We are also told that great numbers die of intestinal worms, for which they seem to know no efficient remedy.

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Commission.*Minute by the Commission.*

448. Of the gravity of bowel diseases in Fijians, and more especially in Fijian children, there can be no doubt; and that they are responsible for a very considerable proportion of the total deaths of natives may be seen from an analysis of any provincial Death Register. An examination of the registers of two large provinces has shown very similar results; and the table below has been prepared to show the proportion which deaths from bowel diseases bear to the total deaths. This analysis has been taken from four years at random within the last ten years, and, although there is a slight up and down tendency in the figures, the general results of the four years are very much alike. Allowance must be made in this table for errors in diagnosis on the part of those who register the cause of death; but these errors are counterbalanced by possible errors in the diagnosis of deaths ascribed to other causes, so that in all probability the approximate truth has been arrived at. The similarity of the figures for each year taken must also be considered to be in favour of the truth of the ultimate results shown.

Year.	Total Deaths.	Total Deaths in Adults.	Total Deaths in Children.	Total Deaths from Bowel Diseases.	Total Deaths from Bowel Diseases in Adults.	Total Deaths from Bowel Diseases in Children.	Percentage of Deaths from Bowel Diseases to total Deaths.	Percentage of Deaths of Adults from Bowel Diseases to total Adult Deaths.	Percentage of Deaths of Children from Bowel Diseases to total deaths of children.
1884 ...	503	129	374	229	70	159	45.52	54.26	42.51
1885 ...	358	166	192	158	71	87	44.13	42.77	45.31
1890 ...	308	156	152	134	66	68	43.44	42.30	44.73
1892 ...	377	133	244	154	59	94	40.84	44.36	38.52

449. From this table it will be seen that considerably over 40 per cent. of the deaths (in two provinces at any rate) are said to be due to bowel diseases, and with slight variation this percentage also holds good as regards adults and children.* It might have been expected that the percentages in the case of children would have been higher, but apparently this is not so, and it is unfortunate that there is not more specialisation and detail given in regard to the ages of the children in these registers.

450. The principal bowel diseases which affect Fijians are diarrhoea and dysentery—diarrhoea more especially in young children and infants, dysentery in both children and adults.

Infantile diarrhoea and dysentery are sufficiently important to be dealt with separately.

In the first place it is to be noted, with regard to these two scourges of infant life in this country, that they are for the most part due to avoidable causes. These causes may be summed up as exposure, dirt, carelessness, bad feeding, bad water, bad nursing, badly-situated and badly-drained towns, badly-built and dirty houses, and many others which, with some little care and trouble on the part of those in charge of the children, might be avoided.

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*As ages are not given in the registers, it is necessary to say that by "children" are meant infants and all up to the age of puberty, *gone lalai* and *gone*.

A very common beginning to a fatal case of diarrhœa is a mild attack of thrush (*macake*).^{*} This is a common infantile disorder in Fijian as in other children, and it is equally common for a mild diarrhœa to accompany it. It is for the most part easily enough cured by a dose of castor-oil, and some cleansing mouth wash; but if neglected it gets worse, diarrhœa increases, and the child wastes; the diarrhœa, remaining unchecked, contributes to the general debility, until the child, in its unhealthy surroundings, is unable to fight against it any longer, and dies. Equally common is the acute diarrhœa brought on by exposure to wet and cold, or to the blazing heat. It is no uncommon thing to see a mother tramping with her child through a steady downpour of rain. If asked why she brought it out, the reply is invariably that she had no one with whom to leave it in the house.

A more chronic form of diarrhœa is due to ill-health on the part of the mother, who often brings her child into the world when she is worn out by overwork and exposure, and when the nutriment she has to supply its needs is consequently poor in quality, deficient in quantity, or even absent altogether. As a result the child contracts diarrhœa and wastes away; and its end is hastened, as often as not, by what must be considered as a very important cause of diarrhœa and dysentery, namely, improper feeding. In using improper food for their children when their breast-milk has for some reason ceased to flow, Fijian mothers are no doubt no wiser than the lower classes of white mothers, who frequently cause diarrhœa in their infants by feeding them on starchy and other foods before the child's digestive apparatus is sufficiently developed for the work it is thus called upon to perform. Fijian mothers are much like these others, and, when their breast-milk fails, feed the child on *ba ni dalo*, sugar-cane juice, or something equally ~~deleterious~~. *ineffacious*.

Infantile diarrhœa may also be due to dentition troubles; and in this case there is very likely also to be chronic and intractable dysentery, made more troublesome by lack of proper nursing facilities and of proper diet—more especially milk. An obstinate and fatal form of diarrhœa is also frequently seen with yaws.

451. Diarrhœa and dysentery in adults are somewhat different in their results. Fijians suffer from diarrhœa brought on by exposure and bad feeding, but as a rule this disease yields easily enough to their own remedies—some astringent infusion or decoction, and absolute rest, of which a sick Fijian is very apt to take his fullest share. But dysentery is with adult Fijians a very serious disease, sometimes being of intense severity, and taking an epidemic form which is very fatal in its effects. There is always more or less dysentery present in every Fijian town of any size; but when this begins to spread and remains unchecked, or is fostered, as it often may be, by lack of food supplies, the result may be a serious epidemic which sweeps off numbers of the people.

Chronic dysentery, too, accounts for a great many deaths; for though, as a rule, Fijians are more likely to entirely recover from mild attacks of dysentery, yet a certain number of cases become chronic and end in death after prolonged exhaustion.

Dysentery in adult Fijians results from causes similar to those which give rise to the disease in Europeans, namely, exposure, neglected diarrhœa, bad food, and actual contagion. Epidemics of dysentery frequently arise in times of temporary scarcity of food,—*e.g.*, after hurricanes where the food supplies of entire districts have been destroyed by the wind, or swept away by the flood, and where the people are reduced to live on *yaka*, roots, and, practically, anything that they can get. Though a Fijian is never known to actually be in want of a meal of some sort, the quality of the meal, in times of scarcity, is frequently very deficient.

452. A word may here, perhaps, be said as to the ideas which Fijian nurses themselves hold on the subject of bowel diseases in their own race. Some intelligent people were questioned on the subject, unfortunately belonging all to one district, so that their ideas may possibly not be universal. The opinion given was that infants never suffer from true dysentery, but suffer only from a form of mucous diarrhœa. They recognise both dysentery and mucous diarrhœa in adults, but have a special name for the latter, which they appear to regard as a separate complaint (*ka dram*i).

They

^{*} *Macake* does not mean only thrush to Fijians, but appears to include a variety of disorders of gastric origin, and is also applied to conditions of illness in which there is a furred tongue or an aphthous condition of mouth after any wasting disease.

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They also recognise thrush as a cause or accompaniment of diarrhœa; and they appear to think that there are two varieties of this disease, although they are known by a vast number of names the use of which is limited to more or less small districts. Native nurses also appear to recognise the diarrhœa which so often accompanies yaws, and it is said that in a particular variety of yaws, where the eruption is red and there is diarrhœa, the number of fatalities is great. Some forms of abdominal tuberculosis are also spoken of, where there is said to be *tense*ness of the abdomen, with swelling, while the rest of the body wastes, and there is obstinate diarrhœa with or without vomiting. Gastritis is also spoken of, as well as three varieties of worms, and some other forms of bowel diseases which are probably but varieties of those already mentioned.

453. Another very important series of bowel complaints, both in children and adults, is due to tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is very widespread among Fijians, whether it take the acute or chronic forms, and the disease necessarily at times makes itself manifest in the abdominal organs. As has been said, it is recognised by natives themselves under various names, which are probably more or less local. Some of their descriptions are easy enough to recognise when compared with what is seen by Europeans. The chief of these tubercular affections is no doubt that known as *tabes mesenterica*, where the mesenteric glands are chiefly affected; and the symptoms most noted are wasting and marasmus with enlargement of the abdomen, and perceptible enlargement of the glands at the back of the abdomen. With this there may be diarrhœa of an obstinate kind. Tubercular peritonitis is also seen both in children and adults—and, in adults affected with tubercular disease of lungs or other organs, there may of course be diarrhœa due to tubercular disease of intestines.

454. Tropical abscess of liver probably also occurs, and possibly acute yellow atrophy of liver, but no cases have been reported, though jaundice of an ordinary type is seen, and sometimes jaundice in children.

Malignant new growths of the various abdominal organs occur, but not with great frequency. Prolapse of rectum, *rectal polypus*, and hernias also occur.

455. As to the causes of the diseases, Fijians appear, in some cases, to recognise that there is really a definite reason why the child or adult becomes ill, as for instance where they ascribe some form of diarrhœa to the fact that the nursing-mother has been indulging in food which has spoilt her supply of milk—(mucous diarrhœa in infants is in some cases ascribed to the fact that the mother has been eating too abundantly of cocoanuts, sugar-cane or other sweet food)—but they have no idea of contagion—that is actual contact—as a cause of disease. They seem to consider that an epidemic is due to something in the air which conveys the disease to every one, much in the same way as influenza originally acquired its name from the supposition that there was some mysterious “influence” in the air which carried it from place to place.

456. Natives administer drugs for the cure of bowel diseases. They have various infusions or decoctions which they cause their patients to drink—either the infusion alone, or the infusion with the leaves from which it is made. They anoint the body with oil, and use massage for abdominal swellings, enlarged glands and so forth; and they employ the diet *tabus* elsewhere mentioned. They also make use of poultices, in the form of bruised or chopped leaves, which are applied to the part which is supposed to be affected.

457. It may also be mentioned that the Fijians, in the leeward provinces at least, still hold to old superstitions, and if they consider the disease to be due to witchcraft, as they often do, they will go to a witch-doctor and request aid in their trouble. One form of yaws, in which diarrhœa is common, may be instanced. This, in a great many cases, is said to be due to the fact that, even before conception or impregnation, the mother or father of the unborn child has done some wrong, has trespassed on or stolen from the garden of some one who has the power of thus bewitching the future offspring. After the witch-doctor has discovered his loss, he performs his pretended incantation, and when the child is afflicted with yaws in the usual course, it has the disease in this special form, which is in many instances fatal. Some say that the fatal issue is invariable; others, that, if the proper medicine

medicine is applied, recovery takes place. A form of what may be called incantation is also used, the spirits of departed relatives being invoked when the illness is severe, though, possibly, this may be only a form of prayer and not a real incantation. Mothers are also said to call on the soul of a sick child to send it to sleep.

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458. To sum up, it may be repeated that the most important bowel diseases in Fijians, both adults and children, are diarrhœa and dysentery; and it is recognised that, from the point of view of this Inquiry, these also are the ones which call for most consideration, because they arise for the most part from preventible causes. Naturally the remedy is to remove those causes, and this can only be done by improving the hygienic condition of the towns, houses, and water supply, by inculcating into the apathetic mother some sense of responsibility for the life of her children, by improving the food supply of sick children, and by enforcing cleanliness by law if it can be instituted in no other way. These are general remedies, which apply not only to bowel diseases, and which, while making admirable theories, will probably be found difficult of practical application. It is not easy to suggest remedies apart from those on general principles to cure diseases due to the causes which have been set forward as responsible for the bowel diseases of Fijians. When there are cleaner houses, and cleaner and better-drained towns, there will certainly be less dysentery and less diarrhœa. When mothers have been taught to recognise the fact that children who have been weaned or who for some reason cannot be nursed may be killed by improper food, and may be saved by the use of milk—tinned or fresh—they may be, perhaps, induced to use milk for their children. When natives have their minds relieved of old prejudices, they may be induced to make patient trial of European methods of nursing and cleanliness for their children and invalids, and they may be tempted to put more faith in the virtues of European drugs instead of resorting to them in the last extreme, and then only in so half-hearted a fashion as to make the trial worse than useless. A case of a Fijian who is certainly more enlightened than the most part of his countrymen may be quoted to show what they can do. This man has lost several children in their early infancy from one or other of the wasting diseases of childhood. He is a man who cares for his children and is particularly desirous of rearing them, and the same may be said of his wife, a very intelligent woman. At dentition the last-born infant was slowly but surely following in the wake of the rest, with chronic dysenteric diarrhœa, when it was weaned and dieted on milk and looked after as a European child would be, even to being taken to another part of the country for change of air. It recovered and is now strong and healthy. When other Fijians do as these people did, and they can be brought to do it by teaching and example, these two infantile scourges will begin to disappear.

Conclusions.

- (1) That bowel diseases are responsible for more than two-fifths of the deaths of Fijians, both children and adults.
- (2) That the principal bowel diseases to which natives are liable are diarrhœa, dysentery, and tubercular diseases of abdominal organs.
- (3) That these diseases are due for the most part to preventible causes.
- (4) That the remedies for them lie in most cases well within the power of the parents and the people themselves.
- (5) That these remedies can best be carried out by stringency in sanitary conditions of houses and towns, by increased care and watchfulness of the parents towards the children, and by education of natives in European methods of nursing and dieting during sickness.

We think that the adoption of our recommendations as to food and water, houses and raised bed-places, Concentration of Towns, establishment of Provincial Hospitals, Institution of Village Crèches, and the introduction of the use of milk, appointment of European Provincial Sanitary Officers, and the institution of a Ladies' Sanitary Mission, will do much to prevent the enormous waste of life which occurs through the prevalence of bowel diseases among natives.

Digest of Replies.

459. Upon the influence of this disease on the vitality of the Fijians, medical testimony must be given the first place. But the evidence of lay writers concerning the extent of the disease and the native practices that bear upon it is of high value.

Of the fourteen writers who speak of yaws, eleven are laymen. Their conclusions may be thus summarised,—

- (1) That the Fijians believe that unless a child contracts yaws it will grow up weakly and unfit to withstand other diseases. The native mother looks upon *coko* as the European mother regards teething,—as a crisis to be passed through before her child can attain robust health.
- (2) That if a child contracts yaws before teething it invariably dies.
- (3) That children affected with yaws are especially liable to contract chills which, by driving the disease back, usually terminate fatally; and that no care is taken by the parents to protect the child from draughts.
- (4) That observation shows the effect of yaws upon children to be a marked debility lasting throughout life.

One writer mentions cases of children being infected with yaws and “cutaneous eruptions of an intermittent character” from birth; but though we have made careful inquiry we have failed to meet with any such case.

A correspondent, writing from Lakeba, believes the disease to be communicated by the filthy pools in which infected and healthy persons bathe in common, and another lay writer thinks that the deaths from yaws are more common now than they were in former times.

Three of the writers upon this head are medical men. They state,—

- (1) That yaws is communicated by inoculation through contact between healthy and infected children.
- (2) That the majority of children contract the disease between the ages of two and six years, and that it is then allowed to run its course without attempt at cure or alleviation. The infected children are allowed to run about covered with dirt and flies.
- (3) That if it be contracted within the first year it is generally fatal.
- (4) That it wrecks the constitution of the patient, rendering him weak and anæmic, and liable to contract diseases which he would otherwise escape.
- (5) That, if it could be shown that *coko* had been introduced within the last two centuries, that fact alone would be sufficient to account for the decrease in population; but that the references to yaws in the writings of the early voyagers seem to show that it existed among the Malayo-Polynesians at a comparatively remote date.

460. With regard to the promotion of measures for the avoidance of yaws, seven writers, three of whom are medical men, urge that steps should be taken towards its eradication. “It could,” says one, “be starved out of the Colony in ten years if the people could be educated up to a sense of cleanliness such as the better classes of Fijians enjoy.” “It would not,” writes another correspondent, “be possible or even advisable at present to endeavour by isolation or otherwise to stamp out the disease;” but it is suggested that the mothers might be persuaded to avoid infection till the children were older and better able to withstand its effects.

One writer suggests that it should be made the special duty of chiefs of towns to see that children with *coko* are being properly attended to. Two writers urge that immediate steps should be taken through the chiefs of villages throughout the Colony to combat the impression that *coko* is necessary to health in later life; but one of the correspondents already quoted fears that the eradication of these ideas would take a longer time than it would to stamp out the disease itself under more favourable circumstances.

*Minute by the Commission.*YAWS (*Coko*).

461. *Coko* is the Fijian name for yaws, a disease now extinct in Great Britain, but met with so late as the present century in the Hebrides, and in the south-west counties of Scotland, under the name of Sibbens, or Sivvens. Its medical designation is *Frambæsia*; in French it is called *le Pian*, and among the Fijians it is called besides *coko*, by its pure Polynesian name—*tona*, and by various dialectic modifications of that word, the use of which extends also to Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and many other South Sea islands.

Yaws is an ailment but little known to the medical profession in Europe, either in practice or through the medium of its literature, which is scanty. The countries in which it is of general occurrence are Africa, Malaysia, and Polynesia. Being contagious, this disease was carried through the medium of the slave traffic from Africa to tropical America and the West Indian islands. From the east coast also, or from Madagascar, it became implanted about 340 years ago in Ceylon by the Dutch or Portuguese traders, where, on account of this origin, it still retains the name *Parangi lédè*, or “Foreigners’ evil.” It was noticed in Java by Crawford, who wrote in 1811–17. Dr. Martin, the able editor of Mariner’s account of the Tonga Islands, writing in 1806–10, was the first to recognise the identity of *tona* with yaws, though he never saw the disease. But the existence of “*tona*” is recorded by Captain Cook and numerous other voyagers to the South Seas in the last, and the early portion of this, century, though they were not aware of its real nature.

462. The premonitory symptoms of yaws are, as a rule, insidious and obscure, though it is generally ushered in by pains in the limbs, fever, and restlessness or languor. The appearance of one of the sores is indeed, as often as not, the earliest noticed indication that a child has become infected. The first sore is usually a large one, perhaps half an inch or an inch in extent, and is prone to become surrounded by other but smaller sores. It is called the *tina-ni-coko* or “mother-yaw.” The testimony of native witnesses agrees with the experience of medical observers in that the original sore generally appears at the site of some wound or scratch and most often upon the lips. Those that follow generally develop about parts of the body where the skin is delicate, such as the neck, groin, and axillæ; and where it becomes continuous with the mucous membrane, as at the mouth and other orifices. But the real cause of the lips being so often first affected is doubtless the proclivity of children to bring their hands to the mouth,—the hand being the most likely member to come in contact with the virus from another child.

After a variable interval a crop of papules or, in one class of cases, of blebs begins to appear, the face and the parts already mentioned being their favourite primary localities. When the eruption begins with blebs, and they are small but numerous, and unequally distributed, the case is spoken of as *coko se-ni-niu*, from the resemblance of the eruption to a spray of the unexpanded flowers of the cocoanut palm.

In the next stage a soft warty excrescence, which is the matrix of the sore, pushes its way through the true skin, destroying the continuity of the latter by forcing it aside, rather than by breaking down its substance. On reaching the surface the granulations which form this outgrowth exude a ~~sinuous~~ fluid which is highly contagious. It forms in drying a crust or scab, the raised appearance of which is very characteristic of the yaws eruption. If this be removed by means of oil or a poultice, the granulated fungated core beneath it bears that resemblance to a raspberry or mulberry which has caused the disease to be named *Frambæsia*. In some cases the crusts assume a curvilinear outline, and recall the appearance of the well-known Pharaoh’s serpents. These are especially seen about the corners of the mouth, the neck, and the axillæ, and constitute the *coko dina* or regular variety of yaws. In other cases they retain a circular shape on all parts of the body, and are then called *coko bulewa*—button or limpet yaws. During the healing process they become converted into annular, or horse-shoe patterns, the centre receding before the periphery.

sanious /

YAWS (*Coko*).Minute by the
Commission.

463. The sores may remain for only two weeks or they may persist for fully two years. They may be as few as one only in number throughout the progress of the case, or they may be counted by hundreds. Usually from six or eight to twenty or thirty are met with through the whole duration of any one case. Ill-nurtured children become a prey to yaws more easily than lusty ones. Sometimes the joints are implicated, even the larger ones, such as the wrist, ankles, or knees; and partial paralysis may follow. In native children the chief ill-effects arising from *coko* are dysentery, diarrhoea, and marasmus. Pot-belly is a frequent concomitant, and *tabes mesenterica* has been thought to follow it. While its active duration varies, between a few weeks and two years, its dormant features may last much longer, and some of its tertiary consequences may appear at almost any age. At a later period of life the soles of the feet of those who have had yaws in infancy become affected by the disease, and, on account of the thick and horny skin by which the soles of shoeless races are protected, the extrusion of the growing yaws through the sole becomes a tedious and acutely painful process. Not only do the typical granulations known as *sucuve*, *soki* or *loro*, force their way through the plantar skin but this part is liable to a cracking, peeling, furfuraceous form of excoriation called *kakaca*, which is nearly as painful, and is also said to be contagious. But the Fijians do not recognise the connection between any of the sequelæ of yaws and the original disease, and hence perhaps, in some degree, the indifference with which they regard it.

464. Of the communicability of yaws by the inoculation of virus from one of its characteristic, raspberry-like excrescences to an abraded surface on the skin of another person, the common classes of the natives must be considered ignorant. They ascribe its communication to less physical and more mysterious influences. At Bau, the chief women appear to recognise the material nature of the infection; and they aver that in former times it was unusual for children of high rank to be allowed to enter the common people's houses, or to play with the commoners' children; and that, as a consequence of this exclusiveness, they seldom contracted yaws until they were of an age to resist its ravages, and, as a matter of fact, generally had it very mildly, while some escaped it altogether. Adi Alisi and Adi Ama are cases in point. So were the late Adi Kuila and Ratu Josefa. Nowadays there is scarcely an exception to the rule that every Fijian child contracts yaws.

465. An idea of the serious nature of yaws may be obtained from observation of its behaviour when acquired by an adult white man. Such cases have been numerous enough in Fiji to impress the European residents with dread and disgust. In the majority of such instances the disease has permanently shattered the health of the persons attacked, its tertiary effects simulating those of neglected syphilis, for, while often no less severe, they have proved almost as ineradicable. They are manifested by lasting impairment of the nutritive functions, emaciation, inflammations of bones or joints, intractable ulcerations, and marked constitutional weakness, thus favouring a liability to intercurrent disease—such as diarrhoea, dysentery, and pneumonia—and not infrequently ending in death. From this it may readily be imagined that the consequences of yaws to native children may be anything but trivial. It is a fact, however, that when the disease is acquired in childhood, it is more likely to pass off easily than when the subject contracts it in adult life. This holds good in the case of Europeans also. The most favourable age for getting over it in safety seems to be between two and six years.

466. The popular belief amongst the natives is that, if a child recover from yaws satisfactorily, it becomes more plump and healthy than one who has never had the disease. For this reason, mothers are pleased when the first symptoms of yaws make their appearance, regarding it as the best thing that can happen to their children to set them on the highroad to a vigorous manhood, provided that the disease is not contracted at so early an age as to presage an unfavourable course. In fact, however, this often occurs, it being a common thing for children to contract the disease while they are still suckling and teething, not infrequently before they can crawl, and even at as young an age as three or four months. When this happens the eruption sometimes

sometimes recedes prematurely,—and the natives believe that its only danger lies in its recedence. They feel no other anxiety about yaws than this. They generally attribute the recedence of yaws in such cases either to *dabe* or to *ramusu*. They give native drugs in the expectation of causing the eruption to reappear, but the method of their treatment is purely empirical, and destitute of rationalism. They absolutely deny that what they call normal *coko* weakens the present or prejudices the future health of the child; and believe that it is only when the sores dry up prematurely (*maca vakaca*) that the child suffers. No attempt is made therefore to destroy or heal the excrescences. On the contrary they are scrupulously abandoned to the chances of plentiful and easy development.

Yaws (*Coko*).
Minute by the
Commission.

467. To some extent this belief appears to be the outcome of a want of discrimination between cause and effect: but it is true that the eruption does sometimes recede; that when this occurs the child is sickly, feverish, and subject to diarrhoea; and that whether these objective signs be spontaneous or secondary, death is more commonly the result in these cases than in others. In severe cases of yaws, natives have in recent years made occasional application to the European medical officers; but, as a rule, it is only when the eruption has normally and gradually all but disappeared, and only one or two of the sores persist, that the Fijian mother will allow any interference with it. In such cases she may apply some native simple—such as a cataplasm made of the *leve ni sau*. A modern, but crude, practice is to heat an old knife or a piece of rusty hoop-iron to redness, and to rub a cut lemon on it. The product is applied as a mild escharotic. It is recorded that in West Africa the natives use a decoction of iron fragments in lemon juice, with the addition of ants and portions of a pepper plant, for the same purpose. As the ancient Fijians were without metals it seems likely that this method is due to the counsel of white men who may have read of the remedy.

468. All the witnesses admitted that the Fijians possess no remedies for the positive cure of *coko*. Nor do they desire any. All were satisfied that native medicines are usually effective in “driving out” the eruption when it has prematurely receded, and that if they be not used or do not succeed in such cases the child must die. The experience of European physicians has shown that by the free use of iodide of potassium with laxatives, followed by ferruginous tonics, and the administration of a plentiful diet rich in nitrogenous material, the virulence of yaws may be successfully combated, not by “driving out” the rash, but by neutralising the *materies morbi*, and by building up the general health.

469. With the observations furnished by the fourteen correspondents we generally agree. We regard this disease as a potent factor in causing avoidable infant mortality in the race. We recognise the difficulty of overcoming native prejudices in regard to it, and of convincing mothers and “wise women” against their will.

470. The native beliefs which our evidence show to exist are briefly,—

- (a) The great body of the people do not understand, and cannot be made to grasp, the idea of inoculability; but ascribe the occurrence of *coko* to causes not appreciable by the senses. While some admit that it may be caught by one person from another, others assert that the cause is intrinsic, and that every Fijian child must, or at least ought to, develop it; and that it is solely a Fijian disease about which white men are naturally ignorant. In Macuata, the “wise women” administer medicines to bring on the disease in cases where children do not readily contract it.
- (b) They believe that, once acquired, it will run a normal and favourable course, unless the child be *dabe*’d or *ramusu*’d; or through the ignorant use of medicines, or by the operation of witchcraft, the eruption recedes prematurely.
- (c) They admit, however, that if a very young child acquires the disease, before it is old enough to crawl, a fatal result is decidedly apt to ensue. Such cases are called *coko ca* (malignant yaws).

(d)

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- (d) They believe that the occurrence of *coko* in a child of a proper age—from two to six years—is of good augury for the future robustness and mental vigour of the subject. They distinctly prefer that their children should contract this disease, and even believe that persons who escape its contagion will grow up stupid, clumsy, and dull (*doga dogo*), and useless mentally and physically. The fear of contracting the disease in adult life, when it affects the subject far more severely than in childhood, disposes the Fijian mother to look favourably on the acquiring of the disease in infancy.
- (e) For the above reasons they are strongly opposed to any medical treatment directed towards the cure of *coko*, except when the eruption recedes, or heals, as they consider, too quickly; and in such cases their one procedure is to give native medicines (*vai ni koko ca*) considered to be efficacious in bringing the eruption again to the surface.
- (f) They are entirely ignorant of the most rudimentary hygienic rules and of the first principles of sick nursing. So many of their prejudices in these matters being directly opposed to European practice, their natural conservatism prompts them to set aside, rather than to test, the teachings of white men.

An opinion was held by some of the native witnesses that the disease was now contracted earlier in life, as a rule, than was the case in former days.

471. In the Line Islands, to which we have previously had occasion to refer on account of the prolificness of its people, the disease was unknown until the year 1864, when it was introduced from Fiji; and the Tokalau natives take measures to cure it.

472. We are of opinion that the promotion of measures for the avoidance of yaws is both desirable and feasible.

But at present the people are far more anxious that their children should contract *coko* than are the uneducated mothers of Lancashire and other factory districts in England that theirs should contract measles. The opinions of the people as to the necessity of getting over the respective diseases in childhood are to some extent the same in both cases; but the disease of yaws is far more virulent than that of measles, a smaller number of people are affected in the one case than in the other, and if the disease were once stamped out of Fiji effectual steps could be taken to prevent its reintroduction.

Efforts should therefore be made in the first place to secure the willing co-operation of the mass of the people. This might be begun through the columns of *Na Mata* and at the various Councils. It should be explained that the disease is acquired by contact with infected persons only, and that it does not emanate spontaneously, as natives generally believe; that it is not beneficial but enfeebling; that many of the inconveniences of after life, such as *soki*, *sucuvi*, and *kakaca*, are the effects of *coko*, and that if *coko* is once stamped out there will be no danger of contracting it in adult life.

The dispensing of iodide of potassium in some form, through the Native Medical Practitioners or others, would assist in the rapid healing of the sores. This might be done in the same manner as ointment for Tokalau ringworm is now dispensed,—a small charge being made for the supply.

Thereafter it should be enacted by Native Regulation that any person who willfully allows a child who has not had yaws to associate with another child suffering from yaws shall be punished, and that any mother or guardian who neglects to keep the yaws sores of her child properly covered shall be similarly liable to punishment.

We think the opinion of the *Bose Vakaturaga* and of the Provincial Councils should be obtained as to the further steps that should be taken to eradicate the disease. But we are of opinion that the appointment of European Sanitary Officers as suggested under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws," would greatly strengthen the hands of the administration in dealing with this matter.

473. Our conclusions under this head therefore are,—

YAWS (*Coko*).

- (1) That *coko*, or yaws, is a serious constitutional disease, the severity of which is lost sight of from the fact that it is almost universal among Fijians.
- (2) That *coko* and its sequelæ are not only responsible for many infant deaths, but that they sap the vitality of the whole native race.
- (3) That from its resemblance to syphilis we think it possible that it has an enervating effect on the child-bearing functions of native women.
- (4) That, through familiarity with it, the natives have no fear of it as a disease of childhood; that they dread its appearance in adults; and that this has probably originated an universal belief that unless children acquire the disease they will grow up weakly and dull.
- (5) That *coko* occurring in the first year of childhood is almost invariably fatal.
- (6) That the natives do nothing towards curing the disease, except when it is passing off, their idea of treatment being practically to allow it to saturate the system of its subjects.
- (7) That the natives have no well-defined idea of its inoculability, but imagine it to be a disease that “grows out of the child.” That almost all native children suffer from the disease for a period varying from three months to two years or longer; and that during that time no care is taken to cover or prevent the exposure of their sores, which thus serve as founts of infection.
- (8) That the natives have no idea that the *sucuve*, *soki* or *lovo*, and *kakaca* (diseases which affect the feet), of adult life are the sequelæ of *coko*.

474. We recommend that endeavour should be made to stamp out the disease from the Colony,—

- (1) By trying to procure the willing co-operation of the people.
- (2) By dispensing iodide of potassium through the Native Medical Practitioners, as ringworm ointment is now dispensed.
- (3) By providing punishment for persons who expose children to contact with infected subjects, and for parents who do not properly cover the *coko* sores of their children.
- (4) By obtaining the advice of the Council of Chiefs and Provincial Councils as to the local steps that should be taken for its eradication.

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475. There is no difference of opinion among the thirty writers who condemn the improper treatment to which the sick and the helpless are subjected. Such treatment appears to proceed from the entire ignorance of natives regarding the simplest rules of medical treatment and sanitary laws, from their prejudice against the advice and the medicines of Europeans, from a stubborn belief in their own simples, and from wilful neglect.

The principal forms of medical treatment common among the Fijians are said to be massage, *vakasilima*, and the taking of drugs. *Bobo*, or massage, is resorted to when the child is said to be *ramusu* (sprained)—a subject dealt with at paragraph 299 of this Report—and it is believed that the results of this treatment are often fatal. One form of *vakasilima* consists of “taking women to the water,” where they undergo digital examinations that frequently result in abortion or serious vaginal complications. Another is when, under the impression that a sick child has some obstruction in the throat, the midwife thrusts her fingers down as far as they will go; and it is believed that both these practices are more frequent now than formerly. The native medicines consist of infusions of bark or leaves, administered either by hereditary “wise women” or by some person who is the repository of the secret of some

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some medicine handed down in his family. But their diagnosis of disease is often, if not generally, at fault.

It is remarked that,—

“They try native medicine, after native medicine, in the hope that one at least may prove the right one; and seldom allow sufficient time to elapse, between administering one, for it to have any effect, before they try some other—seeming to expect that the mere act of swallowing the medicine should effect a cure at once.”

Another correspondent states that,—

“From the first moment of the mother’s *enciente* state being made known, a system of drugging by herbs, barks, or leaves is entered upon—the person who administers the potion being generally ignorant of the properties of the drug or its uses; for, by the time the child is born, the mother has perhaps tried dozens of medicines and as many doctors. Then comes the midwife, who is not always a skilled person, and from the moment the child is born it is forced to commence taking these vile mixtures on its own account.”

476. When an adult person falls sick he is also dosed with decoctions of bark or leaves, prescribed by every neighbour who is the possessor of some panacea. Unless a medicine effects an instant cure another one is tried, and it is not until all the known remedies have been exhausted, and the patient lies at the point of death, that a European doctor is applied to. If the illness terminates fatally the neighbours point to the European medicine as the cause of death; but, even if, as is more usually the case, the doctor’s advice is rejected or neglected, the native herbalists declare that the proposal to consult a white doctor has spoilt the potency (*mana*) of their simples.

The son of the late king Cakobau is quoted as saying on a public occasion, “The white man’s skill in surgery is useful to us, but his medicines to be taken internally only do us harm.” A medical writer says that when natives can be induced to take medicines they will take perhaps one bottle, and if an immediate cure is not effected they return to native treatment. Another writer has met with many instances of death caused by native medicines ignorantly administered and by surgical operations unskilfully performed, but does not wish to deny that much good is done by native herbalists.

477. Much of the improper treatment of the sick is said to proceed from ignorance. A medical writer relates that in an epidemic of dysentery he found that the children suffering from the disease were being fed upon small oysters and land crabs. Under proper treatment they rapidly recovered. The same writer makes note of the listlessness, want of *savoir faire*, and inability to perceive uncleanness, on the part of those charged with the care of the sick,

One correspondent relates that during the epidemic of measles, in 1875, the natives persisted in trying to cool their fevered bodies by lying for hours in the water and in damp places, in spite of strict orders to the contrary. The women seem quite unaware that damp or exposure are hurtful to children suffering from colds. A child heated with fever is plunged into cold water or set naked in the breeze or on damp grass to cool its body. Such ignorance, deplorable as it appears, is to be expected among a people lately confronted with diseases unknown to their fathers, and whose knowledge of diseases is solely derived from empiricism. In the epidemic of influenza, during 1891–92, numbers died through bathing while in fever, as they are said to have done during the measles sixteen years before. A correspondent writing from Ra, where the infantile mortality has been especially high, says that the people die from simple causes through ignorance of the nature of the illness and of the proper remedy. The mothers of sick children are said to neglect them from ignorance rather than from wilful disregard for their condition. “They still cling,” says another writer, “to many old forms and superstitions which time and more education alone will eradicate. In sicknesses that are new to them they are entirely at a loss.”

478. Mothers, we are also told, exhibit a wilful and cruel disregard for their children. They will carry a child on their backs to their work in the bush in rain or sun, while it is suffering from whooping-cough, and even refuse to take it home when the danger is pointed out to them.

Wilful

Wilful neglect of the sick seems to be a large factor in the excessive mortality. The care bestowed is fitful and spasmodic. The whole village will turn out to cut firewood for a sick man, but no one will put the wood within his reach or systematically make up the fire. If a fowl is killed to make soup, the sick man will be given a few mouthfuls, and the neighbours will come in and consume the remainder and the body of the fowl itself, because, to keep the food for the use of the patient would be considered inhospitable.

479. The want of nourishing diet in sickness is said to be often more fatal than the disease itself. The Regulation requiring each *buli* to keep a supply of arrowroot in his town for the use of the sick is disregarded. An instance is mentioned of a native of Tokatoka whose death was hastened because no arrowroot could be procured to keep up his failing strength. "When sick," says another writer, "they turn from their own food with disgust, and during the epidemic of influenza numbers begged rice, biscuit, tea and sugar from the European settlers, being unable to eat their ordinary food." "A great number," says a correspondent writing from the Rewa River, "die of worms owing to ignorance of an effective vermifuge."

480. The mother and child are, we are told, kept for a long period after confinement in a dense mosquito-screen. In Lau, where tubercular diseases are common, the child generally sleeps under the same screen with its grandmother. Children suffering from diarrhoea or dysentery are left to the *vis medicatrix Naturæ*—"the best thing perhaps under the circumstances," adds one writer. The Fijians are entirely ignorant of the use of the hot bath, and they have not the necessary appliances at hand to prepare it.

481. The writers on the subject of native medical treatment are not in accord as to the proper measures to be taken for cultivating a salutary knowledge among the Fijians. While five correspondents think that the number of Native Medical Practitioners should be increased, one writer—second to none in his knowledge of the people—says, "A native medical practitioner in every village would do more harm among infants than good; for it is not so much that medicine is required as the hundred little attentions that a sensible and affectionate woman, at all seasons, pays to her child."

482. But it may be gathered from many of the Papers that the writers generally believe the Native Medical Practitioners who have studied at the Colonial Hospital to be capable of doing good work, even though their labours have not yet borne much fruit. One writer, however, believes that their usefulness is hampered by their rank. "The commoner," he says, "cannot readily approach the chief; and I doubt whether the chiefs generally will be prepared to sink the chieftain in the medical practitioner." Another writer thinks that a Native Medical Practitioner should be stationed every few miles, and that some should be trained to treat specially the ailments to which children are subject, being paid by a tax levied on the *mataqali*. One writer proposes that "a few intelligent women in each province should be taught the elements of obstetric nursing."

A suggestion is also made that in every village a supply of castor-oil and charcoal, made from cocoanut shells, should be kept, and that the natives should be encouraged to use more salt.

483. In connection with the abuse of native medicines, one writer asks that a list of all poisonous herbs in the Colony should be compiled, printed, and circulated, so as to warn natives against their use as medicines. Another thinks that a medical man should be appointed to collect all native drugs, and that every native professing to hold the secret of a remedy should be forced to divulge it in order that it may be submitted to experiment. The number of persons permitted to use native medicines would thereafter be limited.

484. It is also proposed, by one writer, that instructions in nursing should be prepared by the Medical Department, and that these should be published in *Na Mata* and read in the native churches every Sunday.

Several others recommend—

That hints as to the symptoms and treatment of the simple ailments of children should be published in *Na Mata*, or sent to each town, or printed

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printed on cardboard provided with a loop for hanging on the house-posts. The circular issued with regard to the epidemic of Influenza it is said saved many lives.

That 6,000 or 8,000 copies of a pamphlet be printed, for gratuitous distribution, giving advice on medical and sanitary matters, and pointing out to the people their duty to God, the State, their husbands, wives, and children.

That in districts distant from a medical man a supply of remedies, with clear instructions as to their use, should be placed in the charge of some European resident who would dispense them on application.

That an enactment be made providing that people responsible for the health and wellbeing of invalids must, within three days of known sickness, apply to a Native Medical Practitioner for advice and medicine, under a penalty of ten shillings, and subject to a fine of £1 in case of death resulting before such application is made.

That the question of the care of children and the provision of suitable food be brought up for consideration at each monthly bulship meeting.

That the use of oil and turmeric for infants should be revived through the means of the monthly Bulship meeting.—(*Vide* paragraph 380.)

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485. The Fijian methods, if they may be so termed, of dealing with their sick, are empirical in the extreme. Broadly speaking they consist of herbalism, and diet *tabus*, massage, bathing, bloodletting, poulticing, and *vakasilima*. They are chiefly practised by women, who are called *vu ni kalou*, or occasionally *yalewa vuku*; but the latter expression, meaning literally “wise women,” is more properly confined to the wives of the *matai sau* (canoe-wrights and carpenters). The knowledge transmitted by these people is kept secret. As a consequence it often becomes family property, being handed down from mother to daughter, but the natives assert that there are no distinctly hereditary practitioners, and that any person may acquire the necessary information to enable him to follow the business when so inclined, and may discover for himself or herself any *wai* or medicine without special training. If this be so, a wide field for quackery and deception is at once opened, of which any native having a bent that way, and a little more cunning or self-assertion than his neighbours, may avail himself for the sake of credit and gain.

486. Certain barks, leaves, herbs, and climbing plants, are recognised in many parts of the islands as of established efficacy in certain diseases. There is no doubt that many of them possess therapeutic qualities. The native adept, however, is not guided by symptoms in the selection of remedies, except in so far as they enable him to pronounce the name rather than the nature of the disease he is called upon to treat. Having decided which of the native category of diseases his patient is afflicted with, he makes his capital out of knowing or pretending to know what particular *wai* or potion is the cure for it. In the more unenlightened parts of the Colony the people insist upon the herbalist first taking some of the medicine he administers in order to guard against poison.

Hand in hand with medicinal treatment, as carried out by the natives, goes their system of diet *tabus*. These differ from our own regimenal directions in that they depend upon the medicine administered rather than upon the nature of the disease under treatment. When a European gives medicine to a native the invariable question is “*Acava, saka, na kena tabu?*” (“What, Sir, are its prohibitions?”) With certain native drugs certain foods may not be eaten. We can understand that when a man takes a dose of ferruginous mixture he should avoid vegetable astringents; and that if he takes an alkaline draught, he should not, unless with a special object in view, follow it by an acid one. The custom of the Fijian *tabu ni wai* does not appear to be based upon so definite a principle, but to take its origin in arbitrary fancies, and to be to some extent the fabrication of quackery and mystery. But hence probably arises the belief that European drugs do not agree with native food.

487. Massage, called by the natives *bobo*, is employed by them in a great number of illnesses and injuries. We have had occasion to refer to its application to infants in cases of *ramusu*, and to point out that *ramusu* is a term of extremely elastic meaning.—(*Vide* paragraph 299.)

The majority of Europeans in Fiji, even after long residence, see but very little of the practical application of *bobo*, unless they are actually living the life of a native. As practised by the natives, massage is probably more often beneficial than otherwise; but it must not be supposed that it is always innocuous, and in some illnesses it may be actually dangerous. The case of a woman at Rewa, which we have had occasion to mention in another part of this Report, shows that *bobo* is occasionally applied with violence.

488. Bloodletting is perhaps too specific a term to use for denoting the various little expedients which constitute the resorts of Fijian surgery. We have used it more because it expresses the rationale of the treatment which is present in the native's mind, than with reference to the real significance of the processes in question. So long ago as in Mariner's days (1810) the Fijians were noted in Tonga for their expert manipulation of wounds and for their surgical treatment of certain ailments.

Slashing with a bamboo knife or a *kai*-shell is often performed on persons who have pains in the chest or head. The wounds are of a superficial character, and any influence they may exert is counter-irritant chiefly. In some cases, however, it is said, even in those of young infants, this slashing is practised to the extent of causing free bleedings and is done to relieve local congestion. The majority of Fijians have scars on their backs or chests which represent old cuttings of this kind.

Occasionally these scars are met with in other situations and result from opening abscesses, to which the Fijians are very liable. But as a rule both abscesses and boils are left to break of their own accord, and ragged offensive sores are the usual consequence—which, being left exposed to the ravages of flies and filth, soon ulcerate and grow into permanent sores. In that condition they receive no treatment, not even washing.

489. The principle of splints is not unknown to the natives, but they show no care or precision in fashioning and applying them. A Fijian with a broken limb has not indeed the necessary degree of patience to submit to proper treatment; and it is no uncommon thing in the experience of medical men in the Colony to meet a patient with a broken leg hobbling about with his splint on—if he have not discarded it altogether.

490. As a rule when the Fijian bathes in illness he does so indiscreetly. It has been repeatedly observed that he bathes to cool himself when his body is heated rather than to cleanse his skin. When he suffers from febrile diseases to which he is not accustomed he often bathes at the risk of his life. This was eminently the case during the epidemic of measles. The Fijians fail to make use, for sanitary purposes, of the numerous hot springs with which the country is favoured. Excepting at Gau, and at Naseuvou on the Waidina, we have never seen a native bathe in one of them, even for mere pleasure.

491. Bathing is chiefly administered by women to women, especially in derangements of the menstrual function, and in pregnancy. Digital manipulations of the *cervix uteri* appear to be practised in such cases, and there is no doubt that improper manipulations give rise to abortion.

But those operations comprised under the head of *vakasilima* probably include most of the objectionable features of native practice apart from the exhibition of herbal draughts.

The following is a list of meanings attached to the word, so far as measures for the cure of disease are concerned, and there may be others not included in this catalogue.

“*Vakasilima*” from *sili*, *sisili*, *silisili*, to wash or bathe,—

(1) Children immediately after birth are washed (*vakasilima*).

(2) When four nights old, the child is subjected to the process of *vakasilima*, i.e., the midwife administers a little massage, and thrusts her finger

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finger into its mouth, and down its throat, for the purpose of clearing the mouth and windpipe and, if necessary, enlarging the latter. She also holds the child, by its feet, head downwards, and walks about with it for a short time.

- (3) When the child is ten nights old, the above processes are again gone through, and repeated, if thought necessary, as the child grows.
- (4) If a girl has been seduced, and becomes indisposed, a midwife may be called in for the purpose of *vakasilima*, i.e., thrusting her finger into the *pudendum muliebre* and *vagina*.
- (5) When a woman is enceinte, a midwife is called in to *vakasilima*, as above described, so as to facilitate the birth of the infant.
- (6) Two nights after the birth of the infant, and until the tenth night, a midwife will, in some places, daily thrust her finger into the *pudendum muliebre* and *vagina*, for the purpose of removing any clots of blood which may remain in the *vagina*. This is to *vakasilima*.
- (7) When a mother has, after the birth of an infant, had too early intercourse with her husband, a midwife will be called in, who will *vakasilima* her by thrusting her finger into the *pudendum muliebre* and *vagina*.
- (8) If a woman has been ill for some time, and does not seem inclined to recover, a midwife will *vakasilima* both her *vagina*, and her rectum.
- (9) When a man is ill he will in many cases undergo *vakasilima* of the rectum at the hands of a "wise woman."
- (10) If a man is ill, and unable to recover, he will be subjected to the process of *vakasilima*, i.e., have the operation of *cokalosi* performed on him.

The operation of *cokalosi* has been described as corresponding to that known to European surgeons as "external urethrotomy;" but, instead of being performed for the relief of surgical accidents, it is done by Fijians for the avowed object of "letting out an accumulation of bad blood from the abdomen," and is usually resorted to in cases of pains in the back, whether due to pulmonary affections or to rheumatism. The operation is not merely popular, but is believed in with implicit confidence by the Fijians of to-day in many parts of the Group, especially in the hill country and western plains of Vitilevu. One of the trained Native Medical Practitioners, who has since died, submitted himself to this operation on becoming sick after he had been appointed to the charge of a district. Only three years ago, when it was sought to pass a Native Regulation forbidding the performance of *cokalosi*, the Native members of the Board showed such strong opposition to the measure that it was found necessary to practically abandon it, only a mutilated enactment, divested of its penalty clause, receiving the force of law. Opinions as to the danger of *cokalosi* are divided; but except by the Fijians we have never heard any utility ascribed to it. We do not, however, know that its abandonment would be attended with any appreciable effect upon the death-rate.

- (11) If a man and wife live together, and have no offspring it may be that the womb is canted; in which case the midwife will endeavour to adjust it. This is to *vakasilima*.
- (12) Circumcision of males, which is generally practised, is also included in the term *vakasilima*.

492. In addition to these medical and surgical expedients, natives in some parts of the Colony practise *veivatonaki* or incantation. They make sacrifices invoking the dead relations of the sick person to cure the disease from which he suffers. A pot of food may be boiled which a certain family, having recognised right to officiate, will take away, pouring out a libation to the invoked spirit. This, however, is a heathen practice and is only performed in secret and by the less civilised

civilised communities. It is not uncommon, however, for a Fijian mother to call on the spirit of a sick child to send it to sleep.

493. But of perhaps greater importance than the crudity of their medical and surgical treatment is the utter ignorance of nursing which prevails among the people. Not only do the Fijians know nothing of the first principles of health, but they have an exceptional and apparently insurmountable distaste for attending to their sick. Nothing is more irksome to a Fijian than to pay attention to an invalid. An invalid will not even pay attention to himself, though he may be physically quite competent to do it.

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It is not easy to account for this peculiarity of temperament. Polynesians are ignorant, they are even careless, in these matters; Melanesians are still more ignorant, but their carelessness is of a more sympathetic order. But for sheer brute-like heartlessness and inability to feel for the woes of other people the ordinary Fijian commoner, the link between the two races, is perhaps unequalled. In this he is following in the footsteps of his fathers, whose dislike for tending persons suffering from long illnesses led them to bury them alive or leave them to perish in the bush, generally with the patient's concurrence and consent. According to tradition, the custom of strangling the sick (*yateba*) arose with the introduction of the great epidemic of the *lila balavu* at the close of the eighteenth century. Besides the feeling that sick persons, who consumed food and demanded care, could not work, and could not fight for the safety of the tribe, and were therefore a source of weakness, there seems to have been another reason for the Fijians' dislike for invalids. The Rev. Thomas Williams tells us that the Fijians of his day were haunted by a dread that the sick, malignant in their misery, would spit upon (*vakasabiritaka*) the food, and also contaminate the mats, so as to communicate their illness to the healthy, in order not to be alone in their distress. This belief may have now decayed, but it has left behind it the indifference to the welfare and preservation of the sick that formerly showed itself in a less gradual but not more fatal heartlessness.

494. This absence of the faculty of care or sympathy in the native's character makes all attempts to ameliorate his condition tenfold more difficult. Even those natives who believe in the efficacy of medical skill neglect the regular attention of nursing, without which medicines are useless. A native has been known to ask a European doctor for payment for the time expended in having his sores dressed by the medical man without expectation of fee or reward, and to demand a shilling for attending to the dressings himself when the doctor was necessarily absent. It is within the experience of every settler in the country that any assistance given by a white man to a native is almost invariably made a pretext by that native for coming back and begging from his benefactor. In their dealings with their native herbalists, they impatiently turn from one to another. A child falls suddenly ill and its mother becomes *taqaya* (terrified). She makes a few ill-directed efforts to save it, calls in one native wiseacre, and, if the child does not recover after the first dose of the nostrum recommended, immediately summons another. As for herself she is without resource, she is either anxious and worried or else apathetic and careless. Her relations do not improve matters by taunting her with the fact. They themselves offer no assistance: their part is to carp at her and revile her after the burial of the child. There is but one refrain to their conversation—"I told you so: you should have minded my words." The people seem to be incapable of anything like steadiness of purpose where sickness is concerned. This appears to arise partly out of habit, but we think the habit is induced by a want of knowledge of simple physical facts.

495. The work of training Fijians to the practice of European medicine has been fraught with many difficulties and followed with but little real success. Several of the students who did well at the Colonial Hospital during their three years' training, relapsed, after being stationed in their respective provinces, into apathy and inactivity; and in two cases it has been found necessary to withdraw their certificates and cancel their appointments. But, in some cases, they have done as good work as could be expected from their means and opportunities; and this is gratifying

gratifying, inasmuch as it appears certain that the bulk of medical work among the people will have to be accomplished by Native agency.

We conceive, however, that some alterations will have to be made as regards the selection, the training, and the control of Native Medical Practitioners. One of these alterations might be introduced at once and the others initiated gradually. In connection with this subject we would suggest,—

- (1) That some good might be done if all the Native Medical Practitioners were put more directly under the instructions of the Government Medical Officers, and made to report to them periodically about health matters in their districts.
- (2) That those native practitioners who have already been appointed, and all who may be appointed hereafter, should have opportunities given to them of periodically returning to hospital for further instruction and for renewing their knowledge and acquaintance with medicine, surgery, and elementary hygiene. To carry out this plan, it might perhaps be arranged that they should in rotation return to the hospital for three months at a time, two coming together and returning at the end of three months when their places would be taken by other two. When the whole number had completed their course of three months, the list would be commenced again. These old students when they come up could be taught afresh, and it is probable that, after practising in a district and having learnt their own ignorance, they would be the more eager to make use of their opportunities for fresh instruction.

The effect of this renewal of their acquaintance with European medicine and surgery might be hoped to remove from their minds all the old superstitions and native traditions to which they are so prone to lapse; and opportunity might be taken of their return to give them some teaching in the elementary laws of hygiene, so that they might be in a position to oversee the towns in their districts more particularly in this respect.

This would necessitate the provision of permanent accommodation at Suva for the wives and families of two native medical practitioners. These men generally marry after being appointed to a district, and, if the foregoing proposal were adopted, there would always be two of them in residence at Suva. But the consequent expense would not be great.

- (3) That there be a training school or class for boys who mean to become native practitioners; that at this training school they be taught English as a first step to their better instruction in medicine and surgery. There might be a course of instruction at the training school in speaking, reading, and writing in English, for about three years, and from year to year they could be drafted out to the hospital to go through the course of instruction as it is at present. Or it might even be desirable that youths drafted from the training school should spend a year at the District Medical Officers' Hospitals which it is proposed to establish. It seems likely that in this way they would learn more, would learn their work better, and would have opportunities of improving their knowledge which at present they do not possess; they would be able to read elementary books on medical subjects and receive their instruction in English; and they would be the more likely to keep up this knowledge if they made the periodical return to hospital which has been suggested above.
- (4) That the number of native doctors be increased, in order that their districts be made very much smaller than they are at present: until there be, not one or two men in each province, but one or more for each district—for it is impossible for one man to see to all the sick in

in a large province. In cases where there are sick people who require daily care, it may often happen that the native doctor has to go away to the other end of his province and leave his case to shift for itself.

- (5) That the students receive some special instruction in hygienic matters, and that when qualified as practitioners they have authority given them to prosecute in their district courts all those who evade sanitary laws. If European sanitary inspectors were appointed for districts the native practitioners would work in conjunction with them in these matters.
- (6) That there be village hospitals in the larger towns, under the care of the native doctors, and generally supervised by the District Medical Officers, where ordinary cases of sickness could be treated, and where supplies of drugs and medical comforts could be kept to be given to such as needed them. These hospitals could be supported by the province or district as may be arranged.

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496. We would further recommend,—

- (1) That, in the medical districts beyond Suva, small provincial hospitals be established for the use of natives. These hospitals to be in the near neighbourhood of the medical officers' stations; to be permanent wooden buildings, large enough to accommodate six to twelve patients, and to be under the immediate care of the Government Medical Officers, who would have the whole management of them, and who would be assisted by a native compounder or dresser and nurse. That the building and equipment of these hospitals be at the cost of each province, and that each province be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of its own hospital. That the cost of providing food drugs and appliances to each hospital, be defrayed in the first instance by the Government, and recovered yearly from each province in such manner as may be arranged. A hospital could probably be built and equipped for about £300. The annual cost of maintenance thereafter would not be great. In these hospitals some amount of elementary instruction could be given to native nurses, who might be received for a course of three months' instruction and then sent back to their towns, their places being taken by others for a like period.

These hospitals would be the centre of the medical work in each province and might also be attended by Native Medical Practitioners in rotation when the number of those officers increases.

- (2) That there be a training school in Suva for Fijian women, where two or three strong young women could be taken for a year and be instructed in the more elementary rules of the dressing of wounds and sores, and more particularly in ordinary cleanliness and carefulness towards the sick. This is to be regarded as but a tentative measure, to be adopted to endeavour to get rid of the superstitious folly of many of the present modes of treatment adopted towards young children by Fijian midwives and so-called nurses.
- (3) That all the operations comprised under the head of *vakasilima* except (1) The washing of the child with water after birth, and (2) Circumcision, be prohibited under a penalty, of which a portion should be awarded to the informer.
- (4) That a pamphlet dealing with social and sanitary matters, food and drink, medical treatment of simple ailments, and nursing of infants and invalids should be published and circulated widely.
- (5) That by way of marking the responsibility of the chiefs for the health of their people, the questions should be put in every Provincial and District Council,—“How are the children and sick of your district (or town) cared for?” “Who have failed in their duty in these respects?”

Digest of Replies.

497. Seven writers, two of whom are Medical Officers of the Colony, speak of the dirty habits and surroundings of native life. The native house is described as a "whited sepulchre." Under the clean mats the grass, lying on the damp earth, is mouldy, rotten, and full of vermin. The inmates invariably spit under the mats or against the walls; and recent researches have shown that the bacilli of many diseases are present in saliva. The opinion of all these writers is summed up in the following extract.

"Bad air is a frequent concomitant of native life owing to close murky houses, carefully closed up in every crevice at night for the sake of warmth and to keep out mosquitoes. The villages and interiors of the commoners' dwellings are, as a rule, not clean: the former unswept (except in remote mountain towns, which excel in this respect), unscavenged except by the pigs, which substitute excrementitious for putrescent refuse, and overgrown with grass and weeds: the latter dusty, imperfectly matted, tenanted by fleas, bugs, lice and various kinds of acari, littered with food scraps, the *kosakosa* or fibrous residue of used up *yagona*; and the mats themselves and overlying grass or *sasa* smeared with expectoration, for which it is the common practice to make it a receptacle, the urine of infants, and the sanious discharges from yaws, leprosy or other sores. In the universal practice of neglecting all kinds of ulcers is probably to be found the origin of the native belief, that mats are often the medium of contagion, though the reason which exists in the natives' minds for it is a superstitious relic of their ancient cult.

"* * * So long as they fail to acquire a sense of cleanliness in all the little details of domestic economy and of child-life their children will suffer. At present the Fijians from the lowest to the highest are inexpressibly callous to what we call and feel to be dirt and, as such, repulsive and dangerous to health."

The remedies suggested for the existing state of matters are the education and moral training of the rising generation and the inculcation of sanitary principles.

Minute by the Commission.

498. Because the Fijians plunge into cold water generally once a day, and because the floors of their houses are covered with clean mats on the arrival of a visitor, it is popularly supposed that they are a cleanly race. They doubtless compare favourably with primitive races in colder climates, whose clothing harbours filth and vermin, and whose dwellings are superficially too unclean to allow the European traveller to pass the night in them. But the Fijian bathes to cool his body, and not to wash. Where no running-water is obtainable, he prefers to the sea a mantling pool of brackish stagnant water, green with impurities, and he neither uses soap nor does he cleanse his body by hard rubbing. His freedom from clothing, and his habit of treating the hair with lime, make him comparatively free from uncleanness of person, a form of dirt which is perhaps less favourable than some others to the development of bacterial organisms dangerous to health. But in all other respects, in his habits, his dwelling, his eating utensils, and in the condition of his village, he is, according to our standards, as utterly indifferent to cleanliness as he is ignorant of the principles which dictate it. The refuse from the houses is flung out of the doors to be eaten by the pigs and by clouds of blowflies. The sewage of the village is deposited in the bush surrounding the village, where it is consumed by the same universal scavengers, who, in covering the space between the houses with their own droppings, only substitute one form of impurity for another. The clean mats in the interior of the house serve to hide the accumulation of filth beneath them. The bare earth is covered with a layer of dried grass upon which the mats are spread. The floor of the house, being often little higher than the surface of the village square, is in heavy rain soaked with water, and the grass mildews and rots away. The old grass is never removed, but, as decay reduces its bulk, a fresh layer is thrown on it and again covered with the mats upon which the inmates of the house sleep. The Fijians have a habit of continually expectorating. They lift the corner of the mat and spit upon the grass, or against the reed wall or house-post, which in old houses are besmeared and discoloured with dried sputum. The grass of the floor is made the midden for every kind of impurity. The urine of a child, the spilling of fish-broth, the crumbs and remains of the daily meal eaten on the floor, are swept under the mats to decompose. The saliva is the special home of many bacteria, and it has lately

lately been ascertained by experiment that sputum which has been evaporated or dried for months, when again moistened, still contains living bacilli.

DOMESTIC
DIRT.

We may further instance the drinking of chewed *yagona*-root, the eating of food boiled in earthenware pots, never cleansed until worn out by constant use, or in iron saucepans unscoured and coated with grease. At night the doorways are closed up to keep out the mosquitoes, and several persons herd together in one mosquito-screen made of a thick material almost impervious to air. The very mats themselves after a few weeks of use harbour filth between every plait.

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499. If Fijians are uncleanly in their habits during health, they are infinitely worse in time of sickness. They abstain from all kinds of washing from the day on which sickness attacks them, unless they be induced by fever to cool their bodies in the nearest stream or pool. During long illnesses their bodies become covered with vermin, and indescribably filthy. In cases of pulmonary disease the sufferer is not provided with any kind of spittoon. His expectorations bespatter the reed walls near the bedplace. In dysentery, his friends confine themselves to feeding him and neglect to provide him with a receptacle for his excreta, so that the poor wretch, too weak to leave the house, is obliged to scrape a cavity in the earth beneath his mats, and to lie day after day in the tainted atmosphere on mats infested with vermin, while the house is swarming with blowflies. Persons suffering from acute ophthalmia, from the strumous sores known as *vidikoso*, or from yaws (*coko*), live freely with healthy persons, taking no care that the discharge from their eyes or their open sores does not besmear the mats on which others lie, or the coverlets which others use, and scarcely troubling to drive off the swarms of flies that feed on their ulcers and carry the contagion to others. The hands of the nursing-mother are never cleansed. If she be a smoker the fingers with which she holds her nipples to her child are besmeared with nicotine.

Thus young children are born and reared in an atmosphere tainted with filth and the germs of disease, and learn as they grow up to be as regardless of ordinary cleanliness as their parents were.

500. It is difficult to suggest any remedy that will immediately grapple with this state of affairs. The people do not recognise the existence of this general filthiness and cannot be brought to understand that any reform is necessary. As the race begin to substitute discretion for instinct some improvement may be made, but this can only be brought about gradually as education progresses.

Dirt and its consequences should be dwelt on in the pamphlet proposed to be issued with regard to Native Medical Treatment and Nursing.—[*Vide* paragraph 496 (4).]

The institution of a Ladies' Sanitary Mission, the adoption of the recommendations made under the head of "Insanitary Dwellings and Domestic Habits," the Concentration of Villages, the establishment of Model Villages and of Provincial Hospitals, and the appointment of European Sanitary Officers, would all tend in the direction of improving the domestic sanitation of the native.

We think more attention might be drawn to the subject if, once a week, the town-crier in each village were to enjoin the people to observe cleanliness in all things,—in their persons, clothes, bedplaces, mats and utensils; and it might be worthy of consideration whether the non-observance of cleanliness in the house or its surroundings should not be punished by fine or otherwise.

XXXVI.—GENERAL INSOUCIANCE OF THE NATIVE MIND, HEEDLESSNESS OF MOTHERS, AND WEAKNESS OF MATERNAL INSTINCT.

Digest of Replies.

501. Twenty-seven writers enlarge upon this most disheartening feature in the native character, and adduce an overwhelming weight of evidence in support of their views. "It is," says one, "this indifference that prevents the Fijians from following the sanitary advice so often given by those who are interested in them." They cannot be got to take more than a passing concern in the probability of their extinction within a measurable time. Satisfied that it will not take place within their

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their own lifetime they refuse to take any interest in the fate of their posterity. That they are not themselves blind to this defect in their character is shown by the words of a native woman quoted by one of the correspondents:—

“Laziness and improvidence are the root of it. And there are no chiefs in this day to enforce the useful and right thing. We Fijians are not ignorant of what is necessary and good. We know how to prepare it, but we are lazy and indifferent. We no longer fear to neglect.”

Akin to this indifference is the curious mental characteristic, called by one of the correspondents, “Polynesian fatalism.” Often, in cases of long but not dangerous illness, the patient becomes depressed and makes up his mind that he will die. From that moment all desire to live deserts him; and his friends, believing his recovery to be past hope, cease to attend to his wants.

502. It is upon the young children that this quality of mind bears most heavily. One writer declares that the neglect of infants does not always arise from ignorance, but from what he calls “the care nothing spirit of the age.” The words “‘never mind,’ ‘who cares,’ ‘it will last till to-morrow,’ are,” he says, “‘applied to every subject, grave or gay, and taken and acted upon as a motive, justification, or excuse for any neglect of duty or wrongdoing.” A writer, who has perhaps a more varied knowledge of the Fijians than any other, says that the women are a “race of blunted sensibilities.” They are not unkind to their children, but seem deficient in maternal instinct. For this he suggests a curious reason, namely, that “the women are not good mothers, and regard the children as being more their father’s offspring than their own.” Many instances are given of this lack of maternal instinct. Children are carried on their mothers’ backs, their heads swaying about, and their faces covered with flies. They are allowed to strain their bodies with excessive crying. Many of them are filthy and covered with sores to which the mothers are too lazy to attend. Their health is often endangered because the mothers are too selfish to forego some pleasure which entails the exposure of their children to cold and wet. But the most startling of the many instances quoted are those of parents who would have allowed their children to die rather than undergo the trouble of walking a few hundred yards every day to fetch milk supplied as a gift by friendly Europeans. In the face of such evidence it is not surprising that one of the correspondents arrives at the conclusion that—

“The death of a child excites but little grief since it entails no actual loss on them, while the rearing of one causes a vast deal of care and trouble that promises no advantage that they can see.”

Several writers make a further charge against Fijian women. The majority of Fijian girls are said to dislike the cares of maternity. “The child is a nuisance to them. It interferes with their pleasure and their duties.”

503. The instability of native character and the people’s want of foresight is thus set forth by one of the correspondents:—

“The gross carelessness, or what appears to us so, of native women for the welfare of their children, arises not so much from ignorance of an infant’s wants as from—I can put it in no better way—the savage animal nature that will allow her to make no self-sacrifice, not even for her own offspring. With a patience that any white woman might envy, I have seen them watch, when the child’s life was past all hope, by the little sufferer’s mat, denying herself food while she waits and tends the child, whose life might have been saved, at least, in many instances, if she would only at an earlier period have been content to sit in her house of an evening, instead of in the *rara* of the village gossiping or watching some *meke*, with the cold deadly land-breeze sweeping from the hills falling on—in many cases—the naked body of the child.”

504. The writers who have supplied the mass of evidence briefly summarised under this head, have drawn their experience from all parts of the Colony; and their long residence in the country and intimate knowledge of the natives qualify them to speak with a weight that must overbear the indignant protest of the solitary defender of the character of Fijian mothers, who writes,—

“Isolated instances of neglect may occur as in all countries, but to say that they wish to have no children, that they lack a mother’s pride in them, that they despise the weak child, that they go to work in their gardens leaving their children behind in the village without food or care, that others take them to the plantations in the cold and wet, are gross calumnies, in support of which I do not see the slightest evidence. The women work no harder than they did formerly. But what about Tonga where the women do no work at all, like the Rotumans already mentioned, and yet are disappearing fast; and no such reasons as above stated are or can be assigned?”

Minute

Minute by the Commission.

505. Regarding the general insouciance of the native mind, something has been said under the head of "Mental apathy."—(*Vide* paragraphs 220—225).

This insouciance has its root, like every other evil, in selfishness—a quality which is most at home in a communal state of society. Even in civilised communities, defrauding the commonwealth is looked upon as a venial offence, provided it be not discovered. But that feeling is intensified in the communal society, and among Fijians discovery entails little actual disgrace. The instincts of the individual prompt him to give and to do as little as possible, and it becomes natural to him to defraud the community if he can so contrive, hoping at the same time that the other members will fulfil their obligations. Thus his life is exercised into a channel of passive selfishness. He has no larger conceptions, no pride of race, and no nationality. Fiji is not regarded by him as his country: Fiji is the world; and while the Fijian has less concern about the natives of the hundred and sixty-four districts beyond his own than an ordinary Englishman has in the Esquimaux, he has no more actual interest in his own immediate commune than the Englishman has in posterity at large. So that the enjoyment of his lands in his own lifetime is not jeopardised, the Fijian does not feel called upon to avert the threatened extinction of his race by any measures that demand from him the slightest exertion.

506. There is little or nothing to disturb this prevalent spirit of indifference. In the time when the existence of a tribe depended upon its numerical strength there was an influence that far outweighed the natural apathy of Fijian parents. In the grim application of the law of natural selection, which the never-ceasing wars between tribes induced, only the fittest survived. The tribes that had reared most male children had the most fighting men, and they alone could hold their own. The old men and women who had grown-up sons were the last to suffer from want or insult. These incentives to the proper care of children may not have been constantly before the minds of the Fijian parents of those days, but it moulded the daily life of the community, and gave all the members of the community an interest in the welfare of their people. One correspondent (Paper No. 48) has ably described the decay of this influence consequent upon the security brought about by the establishment of the *Pax Britannica*. A tribe has no longer any object in being numerous except the fear of losing possession of its communal lands. Parents no longer look to their children to support them in their old age, for they now need no protection, and they have not the fear, ever present to the members of civilised communities, of destitution in their declining years. In these days therefore the spirit of indifference, formerly to some extent neutralised, has full play.

507. The heedlessness of mothers and the lack of maternal instinct constitutes one of the most marked gaps in the Fijian character. One of our Tokalau witnesses remarked, "We Line Islanders love our children; their father loves them as much as their mother does." And this fact is evident in the behaviour of the people towards their infants. Fijians doubtless love their offspring in their own casual way, but there is an utter lack of devotedness in their relations, such as may be daily seen among Line Islanders and even among Indian coolies. It has been said by one of the correspondents that the Fijian woman does not possess the maternal instinct to the same degree that civilised peoples do. While this is, perhaps, the case, it has also to be borne in mind that she in her turn sees little of a devoted spirit among the men of her race, and receives but little assistance from her husband in the up-bringing of their children.

This defect in the Fijian character is not the growth of the few years during which the ancient social system has been subjected to the undermining influence of contact with Europeans. The stringency of the old customary law that provided for the proper nourishment of children by the separation of the parents after birth, would seem to show that maternal instinct was not a characteristic that could be relied upon for the preservation of the race. While the necessities of war rendered it desirable that as many male children should be reared as possible, female children were

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were less necessary to the tribe, and accordingly we hear that female children were often destroyed. In the cases of female infanticide recorded by the early missionaries there is no mention of resistance or regret on the part of the mothers. They seem to have acquiesced as being either by nature, or by the influence of their social system, devoid of maternal instinct.

508. As an instance of the depths to which this absence of maternal instinct may bring a savage mother, we may mention a case that was reported to us as having occurred in the Rewa province several years ago. A woman, finding that the dark corners of her house were much infested with mosquitoes, put her child of about two years of age, naked, into the corners of the house until its body was covered with the insects, which she then killed by slapping the child's body. She repeated the act until the child was so much injured that it died. It is fair to say that the natives to whom we related this story spoke of the act with some disgust, and that we believe that such cases of barbarity are as rare among Fijian mothers as they are in civilised communities, to whom unfortunately they are not unknown. The ill-treatment of Fijian infants consists generally in acts of omission rather than of commission.

509. It would be as idle to hope that the maternal instinct could be specifically implanted in Fijian women as it would be to speculate upon the reasons for its absence. It is an instinct to be found strongly marked in some species of mammalia, weakly in others, and it attains perhaps its highest development in the Caucasian races of man. The conditions of struggle for existence probably develop the instinct, since those individuals that possess it will perpetuate their race to the exclusion of those who do not, and we believe, that, as the race advances, the maternal instincts of the women will improve. They have undoubtedly undergone a change since the days when infanticide was prevalent, for, although the mind of the people is far too conversant with such subjects as abortion and prevention of conception, we do not believe that the practice of infanticide could now be re-established. We incline to think that the absence of the practice of self-denial by Fijian mothers is due more to the uncultivated condition of their mental faculties, to the casual nature of the savage which hates all restraint and precision, than to an absolute absence of the quality of affection,—although that also is doubtless impaired,—and that these negative conditions proceed more from their surroundings than from their subjective capacities.

510. Much of the heedlessness of which they stand accused arises from a sense of helplessness, which naturally induces a belief in fatalism. The native is absolutely the child of circumstances. He is without the energy or ability to control circumstances, while his general apathy and want of foresight place him entirely at their mercy. In cases of infantile sickness, therefore, he is without resource. He will obtain what is regarded as the proper native medicine for the sufferer, and may even try a number of medicines, but the impression in his mind generally is that if the child's life is to be saved the medicine will do it, and if the child is ordained to die, it is impossible to interfere with the course of nature.

It is probable that the death, through epidemics, of so many of the old people who, before the time of the measles, took the nursing of children largely out of the hands of the working-people, may have considerably affected the death-rate of infants and brought the shortcomings of the adults (*uabula*) into greater prominence.

511. The great obstacles in the way of social and sanitary progress are ingrained in the native character. They consist of ignorance, indifference, laziness, carelessness, heedlessness, helplessness, prejudice against advice, instability of character, want of foresight, lack of maternal instinct, dislike of maternity, and general selfishness.

It may be assumed that the people will not spontaneously assist in the eradication of these barriers to progress. It may be taken for granted that they will not even follow advice that may be given to them. But we have no doubt whatever that the people are prepared to render obedience to such orders as may be imposed on them, provided it is made clear that obedience is expected.

While

While, therefore, we cannot rely upon education alone to make the Fijian value the life of his children, we think that education, given through the medium of a Sanitary Mission, would save the lives of such infants as are annually sacrificed to the ignorance and the ill-directed efforts of those parents who would preserve their children through sickness if they were provided with the proper means; and we believe that education and the spread of information will dispel many of the conditions that lead up to this general insouciance and heedlessness.

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512. Two measures recently enacted would, if effectually carried out, assist in bringing home to the people their responsibility for the wellbeing of their infants. The first is a Native Regulation (No. 5 of 1892) which provides for inquests on the deaths of infants under one year of age; the second is a Native Regulation (No. 6 of 1892) by which penalties are provided for neglect of children by parents, whether such neglect result in death or not; and we believe that, if the duty of prosecuting offenders against this Regulation were vested in a European instead of a native officer, the beneficial result would be immediate. In this, as in so many of the Native Regulations, it is not to be expected that native officers will prosecute for offences which they do not regard as being in the slightest degree reprehensible.

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513. Before proceeding to consider the proposed remedies which we have indicated and to which allusion has from time to time been made in the foregoing divisions of this Report, we wish to draw attention to the conditions existing in the island of Rotuma, whose people come within the administrative limits of the Colonial Government.

And we take this opportunity of adding a few words on the subject of Tuberculosis, to which the Rotumans in particular are stated to be very subject, in its relation to the Fijians generally.

ROTUMA.

Digest of Replies.

ROTUMA.

Digest of Replies to Circular.

514. Two correspondents make special reference to the Rotumans, who are distinct in race and language from the Fijians.

The Acting Resident Commissioner of Rotuma points out that the predisposing causes of the mortality in that island are—

- (1) Inbreeding,—nearly all the islanders being more or less consanguineous except in districts where there is a large proportion of Line Island* blood.
- (2) Scrofula, by which one-half of the people, principally the women, are affected.
- (3) Emigration of the healthiest of the males to Torres Straits and Fiji, thus leaving the sickly and scrofulous to propagate the race.
- (4) Pulmonary diseases, probably due to exposure.

It is pointed out that the children are carefully tended after birth, and that the women do no hard work, engaging only in fishing.

Another correspondent is of opinion that nothing will arrest the decadence of the population of Rotuma unless it be supplemented by immigration to check the prevalent inbreeding.

The soil of Rotuma is of extraordinary fertility, and the people are well provided with food. But it is pointed out that in addition to scrofula they suffer from rheumatism, diarrhoea, dysentery, low fever and elephantiasis.

515. The only remedies proposed are,—

- (1) Introduction of foreigners, preferably Line Islanders or Samoans, to counteract the inbreeding which now prevails.
- (2) Dissemination of information as to the prevention and treatment of pulmonary complaints.

Minute

* Ellisee and Gilbert Groups.

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516. The island of Rotuma is situate in latitude $12^{\circ} 30'$ S., longitude $177^{\circ} 10'$ E., and the climate is consequently warmer than that of any part of Fiji. The rainfall is as great as, or greater than, that of the wet districts of Fiji. The people belong to the straight-haired Polynesian family, with a certain admixture of Line-Island* blood, which is probably tinged by a Mongolian element.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
The population of Rotuma consisted in the year 1881 of...	1,126	1,326	2,452
At the Census of 1891 the population was returned as ...	1,056	1,163	2,219
Decrease ...	70	163	233

This decrease is equal to 9.50 per cent. for the decade. It is believed, however, that during the decade, the emigration from Rotuma slightly exceeded the immigration. At the present time it is reckoned that 320 Rotumans are absent from the island, most of them being engaged as divers at the pearl-fisheries in Torres Straits, and as sailors—capacities for which the men show particular aptitude. In consequence of this element of absenteeism the females exceed the males on Rotuma, there being 110 females to every 100 males, whilst in Fiji the sexes are in the proportion of 87 females per 100 males. Most of the absentees, however, have wives on the island. It is to be noted that during the decade the decrease of females has been twice as great as that of males. This is not due to hard work, for the women perform none except fishing, and that is more of a pastime than a labour; but it is probable that the greater prevalence of tuberculosis among the Rotuman women affects their stamina and renders them unable to resist any attack of disease.

517. During the decade Rotuma was visited by four epidemics, viz.; dysentery in 1882, whooping-cough in 1884, dengue in 1885, and influenza; and it may be said that the decrease is very largely due to foreign epidemics.† In addition to the mortality arising from these visitations there have been many deaths from fish-poisoning. Fish, as may be readily supposed, is one of the principal foods of the people; but, after the hurricane of 1885, almost all the fish in the vicinity of the island became poisonous. Many deaths took place in the short time that elapsed before this circumstance became known; and, even since then, there have been many instances in which a native has been unable to resist the temptation to indulge in a meal of fish, and has paid for his temerity with his life.

518. It has been stated by a late Resident Commissioner that the natives of Rotuma do not make even as good nurses as Fijians in a sick-room. They exhibit the same impatience of treatment, and abandon the use of a medicine if it do not effect an instant cure. Their favourite treatment is that known as *sarau*, which consists of massage with copious applications of cocoanut-oil over the affected part of the body.

519. More than one-half of the deaths are those of children; and most of these deaths appear to result from, or to be connected with, the disease known in Fiji as *coko* (yaws).—[*Vide* paragraphs 459—474 *ante*.] It is also believed that the native medicines given to infants do great harm. We are informed, too, that when an infant is sick the native physicians will sometimes forbid the parents to wash it, and on other occasions will order the child to be bathed in the sea before sunrise, for a period. It also appears that the food given to infants is deleterious. Rotuman parents, for instance, sometimes feed their infants on chewed salt beef and on *via-root*,—substances which the digestive apparatus of an infant cannot possibly assimilate.

520. There can be no doubt that consanguineous marriages among the Rotumans are very prevalent, and perhaps unavoidable; but it is strange to find that the orthogamous-cousin-marriage

* Ellice and Gilbert Groups.

† During the year 1893 there was no epidemic sickness. The births were 113 and deaths 90,—an increase of 23.

orthogamous-cousin-marriage system which obtains in Fiji is unknown in Rotuma. ROTUMA.
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521. The great prevalence of scrofula or tuberculosis among the people doubtless weakens the stamina of the children born. We have not been able to visit Rotuma or to observe the extent and nature of this disease on that island, but the following observations made on the disease as it affects Fijians (*vide* paragraphs 525—534 hereof) apply also to the case of Rotumans.

522. We are informed that over 10 per cent. of the population—principally males—suffer from elephantiasis; and it is a well-known fact that a considerable proportion of the few Europeans who have lived on the island have also contracted this disease. It is not an acutely fatal malady, but there is no doubt that in a great many of the cases it places a mechanical impediment in the way of exercising the reproductive function for a large portion of the sufferer's adult life.

523. The suggested introduction of foreigners into Rotuma is in practice a somewhat difficult matter. Men could not be introduced as they would have no status in the island in consequence of their owning no land, and the number of women on the island is already in excess of that of men. If it were possible to promote intercourse between the Ellice Group (now under British protection) and Rotuma, it might lead to intermarriages that would benefit the Rotumans, and would facilitate the introduction into Rotuma of the Tokalau methods of feeding infants, —a subject on which the Rotumans appear to require instruction. Whether this would be feasible we are, from lack of local information, unable to say; but it is a matter that might be considered by the chiefs.

524. We would also recommend that inquests should be held by the Resident Commissioner on all still-births, and on the deaths of all infants under two years of age, with the view of ascertaining what endemic causes and what special acts of commission or inattention lead to the infant mortality.

We also think that the Commissioner should endeavour to introduce the use of milk—fresh or tinned—as a food adjunct for weaned infants; that one or two Rotumans should be instructed as Native Medical Practitioners; and that the question of segregating and so stamping out yaws (*coko*) in Rotuma should receive practical attention.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Minute by the Commission.

525. Although it is by no means so prevalent as among the Rotumans just mentioned, the tubercular taint appears to be very strongly marked among Fijians, and must have a very decided influence on the vitality of the race: and the powers of resistance to other diseases, both in young children and in adults, must thereby be seriously impaired. It makes itself known as phthisis, strumous ulcerations, chronic bone diseases, and very commonly as a form of ulceration of face, nose, pharynx or throat, which is probably rightly named tubercular lupus. These are perhaps the most common forms in which tubercle manifests itself in these islands; but it is also seen as *tabes mesenterica* in infants, tubercular peritonitis, and tubercular disease of other internal organs. TUBERCU-
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Minute by the
Commission.

526. All these forms of tuberculosis, it is to be noted, are much most common in the windward parts of the Group, in Kadavu, and in Cakaudrove, where the Tongan admixture is strong: they are rarer in the western parts of Vitilevu and in the mountain districts; but even in these, where the race is purer, tubercular disease is far from uncommon. Descendants of native Fijians and Europeans are also notably affected with struma in all its forms, from which it would appear that the native Fijian does not bear crossing with some other races. Those varieties of the disease which are more commonly seen to affect the mixed race are phthisis, pharyngeal lupus, and chronic bone disease; but struma generally, especially as it manifests itself in ulcerations of skin, is very common in all parts of Fiji.

527. Pulmonary tuberculosis is met with in all the varieties in which it occurs in other races, whether as hæmorrhagic phthisis, or as acute, rapidly-breaking-down pulmonary tubercle of young adults, or as a more chronic form of fibroid phthisis met with in older men and women. The returns of the Colonial Hospital do not show a large number of deaths from this disease; but it is probable that many of the patients returning, after a period of treatment, to their towns and their friends, eventually get worse and die; and it is certain that in the outlying districts many die without making any attempt to get to the hospital.

528. Lupus manifests itself at all ages, from childhood upwards, in the people specially subject to it, but it is commonest in early adult life, beginning about the age of puberty, and being most destructive in its results from that time up to the age of twenty-five or thirty years. It is commoner among women than among men. It occurs as an ulcerative form in the face, nose, neck, and less frequently in other parts of the skin; but the localities which are oftenest destroyed by its ravages are the fauces, palate, and pharynx: very frequently the whole of the soft palate is entirely destroyed, and the sole remains of the pillars of the fauces are scars of cicatricial tissue: there is often deep scarring of the pharynx, the back of the mouth appearing as a vast cavern instead of being filled with the structures usually to be seen there. The nose, too, is the seat of much destruction, and may be eaten away entirely.

529. Strumous ulcerations of the skin of the body and limbs are the commonest diseases met with in Fijians. Thus in the returns of 1892 for the Colonial Hospital, out of 621 cases admitted during the year, of all diseases in people of all races, there were 104 cases of "ulcers" in Fijians alone—the total number of Fijians admitted being 246. That is to say more than 40 per cent. of the Fijians were admitted for ulcerations. These cases were all of strumous origin. The disease is known by the natives themselves as *vidikoso*, and usually takes the form of indolent, excavated ulceration of skin, sometimes extending to the bone. These ulcerations usually run a slow course, and when of large size, as they frequently are, the resulting cachexia is serious. They are, as a rule, very much neglected, generally uncovered, or at most dressed only with a piece of dirty native cloth, unwashed for days—a fruitful breeding-ground for flies and general nastiness.

530. Besides these there are other diseases due to the same taint, namely, tubercular glandular enlargements, chronic disease of bones, with deformity and enlargement, necrosis of long bones, and the tuberculosis of abdominal glands which is believed to cause a great many deaths among children; probably also tubercular diarrhoea both in children and adults.

531. Yaws (*coko*) occurring in children of tubercular parents is probably intensified in its severity, and children who have been weakened by a prolonged attack of it are the more prone to die of some form of tuberculosis. Adults also who bear marks of severe yaws in childhood are more liable to contract some form of tuberculosis in after-life.

532. There is a prolific field for scientific investigation in the abstruse medical questions which exist with regard to possible identity of origin of such diseases as those now referred to.

It is but a step, for instance, from yaws to syphilis; and but another from syphilis to strumous diseases of bone and skin—especially those prevalent among the Fijians and some other Pacific islanders; and but one more from struma to pulmonary or general tuberculosis. We deem these questions too purely pathological, and in the present state of knowledge too speculative, indeed, to claim more than a passing allusion in this Report.

533. The question of suggesting remedies for a disease such as this, so widespread in its ravages among a people difficult to treat under any circumstances, must necessarily be one of great difficulty. It is hard to say what may be of practical use beyond the suggestion of improved hygienic measures, eradication of *coko*, increased facilities for obtaining medical care, better provision for the sick, and other general measures of sanitation which are of use among more civilised races for similar diseases.

Conclusions.

*Conclusions.*TUBERCU-
LOSIS.

Conclusions.

534. Our conclusions under this head are—

- (1) That the whole race is much tainted by various forms of tubercle, acquired and inherited.
- (2) That much of their inherent weakness is due to debility brought about by this taint.
- (3) That more deaths occur from tubercle than at first sight would appear to be the case.
- (4) That females are more affected than males, and that the disease is probably on the increase.
- (5) That the practical remedies lie in the improvement of all hygienic conditions, better care of children, better care of all invalids, and increased facilities for obtaining medicines and medical treatment.

The remedies suggested under the heads of "Food and Drinking-water," "Insanitary Dwellings and Domestic Habits," and "Yaws," the institution of Village Crèches, and the introduction of Milk Food for infants, the establishment of Provincial and Village Hospitals, the increase of Native Medical Practitioners, and the introduction of a Ladies' Sanitary Mission, will, if adopted, do as much as can be done by way of general treatment to combat the effects of this widespread and degenerative disease.

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REMEDIES
PROPOSED.

535. We now pass on to the separate consideration of the Remedies proposed against further decrease in the population, in the order of the classification adopted at paragraph 15.

536. The causes suggested, in the replies to the Colonial Secretary's Circular, for the decrease of the native population, together with those we elicited from the witnesses examined, and those which in our opinion operate in this direction, have been set forth in the foregoing portion of this Report (paragraphs 17 to 534).

Many of the proposed remedies, in the classified list, have also been discussed in conjunction with the consideration of causes to which they specifically relate, in the manner foreshadowed in paragraph 15. Some of them, however, are of more general application and have only been incidentally referred to. But, in order to present the matter in a clear form it is convenient to take the whole list of remedies *seriatim* and to indicate, in the cases of those already treated of, at what parts of the Report they have been reviewed.

Tutelar.

Tutelar.

537. The first division of proposed remedies comprises measures devised chiefly for ensuring the better guardianship of infants and children; and necessarily, includes, to some extent, matters which it is believed would tend to the gradual enlightenment of mothers. Educational reforms, however, are particularly difficult of application among barbarian races whose status in the scale of civilisation has (by reason of their isolation from the rest of the world) been held stationary for ages through the absence of superior example. Such peoples become the children of experience only; and such experience being merely of a local, limited kind, is but little open to the innovations of thought, or other means of development. Their methods are as a consequence essentially empirical and uninventive; and among no people, perhaps, is this more true than among the Fijians.

The most hopeful methods of securing the safety of their children must therefore be by object lessons, not by mere precept.

The Fijian has but one response, however, when the example of the white man is held up to him. "That may be very well for you," he says, "but we are Fijians, and the ways of our fathers are the most befitting for us." As he will not have knowledge thrust upon him, we must turn our attention towards enlightening his

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his mental darkness by more adroit and practical means, and by luring him, if possible, to be the unconscious instrument of his own salvation. It will not be denied, by those who are acquainted with the Fijian character, that this is likely to prove a most difficult and often discouraging task.

THE CRËCHE
SYSTEM.

I.—THE CRËCHE SYSTEM.

538. The Crèche System, for instance, theoretically appropriate though it is, presents undeniable difficulties of administration, and its introduction must necessarily be befraught with many reverses. The mention of it to a native has, up to the present, merely excited an incredulous smile. As a rule, natives are wanting in perseverance and backbone, and look prematurely for results. What should afford a stimulus for ingenuity and further industry, thus becomes only an agent by which they are disheartened. But in all new undertakings the moral encouragement and support of the Government is a great safeguard, and we have, on the whole, thought that the crèche system might be tentatively introduced, perhaps, in one province or district only at first. This remedy was recommended for adoption in connection with "Neglect of children by reason of the parents' work and absence from home," and is treated of in sufficient detail at paragraphs 396 to 402. We have now only to add that it seems desirable that those paragraphs be translated into the vernacular and printed for circulation among the chiefs and people in order that their minds may be opened to understand the proposal and that the way may be prepared for its discussion in Council.

INSTITUTION
OF INQUESTS
ON INFANTILE
DEATHS.

II.—INSTITUTION OF INQUESTS ON INFANTILE DEATHS.

539. Six writers urge the institution of a system of Coroner's Inquests in all cases of infantile death. One of these proposes that a medical officer should be detailed to diagnose the diseases prevalent among children. Another confines his proposal to the collection of statistics on the influence of yaws upon the infant mortality. The other writers upon this question recommend regular inquests by Native Coroners upon the cause of death of young children, though they differ as to the native officers best fitted to hold such inquiries. The proposal was so evidently advantageous, that very shortly after the receipt of the replies to the Circular, a Native Regulation was passed (No. 5, 1892) requiring Native Magistrates to hold inquests in all cases of still-births and of the death of infants under one year of age. If these inquests have so far failed in supplying scientific information on the subject, they have at least succeeded in calling attention to cases of neglect by the parents that may in time awaken a sense of responsibility to take the place of the parental instinct now so deplorably absent. We think, however, that the usefulness of these inquests would be increased if the Native Magistrates were furnished with a set of printed questions to be put in addition to the ordinary investigation, to ascertain such facts as whether the deceased child had or had not suffered from yaws, the condition of the house in which it died and the number of inmates, the family history, the medical treatment of the child and of the suckling-mother, the food of the infant, and so forth. We believe that some valuable deductions might be made from the consideration of the information obtained by means of these inquests.

540. Of seventy-one cases inquired into in 1893, three turned out to be abortions; and of the remainder it has been found on digesting and tabulating the very crude and vague evidence tendered by the witnesses, that nine of the children (including a pair of female twins) were believed to have died *in utero* some time before their birth, mostly from causes not stated or understood.

541. In ten other cases, including also a twin labour, the children are said to have died during the birth. (Three of these were breech presentations, three were prolonged labours, and in the remaining four the accident was not explained).

542. Whooping-cough, influenza, and their sequelæ, principally broncho-pneumonia, would appear to have accounted for the deaths of no less than twenty-seven

seven of the forty-nine children who were born alive, in so far as the statements are sufficiently precise to admit of intelligible interpretation ;

Yago damu or *damudamu* or *yago dra*, of three ;
 Deprivation of breast-milk, two ;
 Yaws, three ;
 Colic, one ;
 Head pains (meningitis ?), one ;
 Chronic abscess and neglect, one ;
 Improper diet and neglect, one ;
 Deficient vitality at birth, three.

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In seven cases the evidence elicited was not sufficiently intelligible to admit of any opinion being founded upon it.

543. The salient fact brought to light by this series of inquiries is sufficiently significant—the large proportion of deaths of children under one year of age from exotic infectious diseases and their sequelæ. And these occurred in a year when neither whooping-cough nor influenza was more prevalent than has usually been the case since their introduction into the islands.

544. We therefore think that these inquests should be continued and that their quality should be improved.

{ III.—IMPROVEMENT IN THE DIETARY OF INFANTS.
 { IV.—ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE USE OF COWS' OR GOATS' MILK.

IMPROVEMENT
 IN THE DIETARY
 OF INFANTS.
 ENCOURAGE-
 MENT TO THE
 USE OF COWS'
 OR GOATS'
 MILK.

545. A summary of our views on the employment of these remedies is given at paragraphs 444, 445, and 446, in the division on "Infants' Food."

V.—CIRCULATION OF INSTRUCTIONS IN NURSING.

CIRCULATION
 OF INSTRUCTIONS
 IN
 NURSING.

546. We are strongly of opinion that leaflets or a pamphlet dealing with nursery hygiene, in a manner adapted to interest and instruct the native mind, should be published, and widely circulated. The principles expressed in this pamphlet could be best inculcated by such an agency as the Ladies' Sanitary Mission which we advocate elsewhere.

VI.—INSTITUTION OF REWARDS FOR LARGE FAMILIES.

INSTITUTION
 OF REWARDS
 FOR LARGE
 FAMILIES.

547. One of the correspondents proposes that rewards of some kind should be given to women who have reared families of five or more children.

Another, in an able review of the subject says:—

"The remedy for this is exceedingly simple. Make it their evident interest to rear their children, and depend upon it, if human nature is human nature, their children will be reared.

"The Government is the best judge of how this can be best done. I think the following plan, while far from perfect, presents some advantages:—

"Let a number of medals or badges, conspicuous and by preference ornamental, be prepared. Let them be conferred with considerable ceremony, and command, under penalty, wherever seen, whether worn or not, the *Tama* (perhaps in a modified form) now exacted by chiefs. Let the recipients be women of good moral character, who have never been convicted of any crime, nor divorced from a husband—the mothers of a given number of living children: that number to be above the average determined by the statistics as proper to each marriage. Let the mother in Fiji, while she retains her medal, receive the honours accorded formerly to the mothers in Israel. Let her release her husband from his taxes, her husband and her sons from the chief's *lala* for either private or public work or contribution of food. Let the death of a child, except by unavoidable accident, recall her medal till another is born (deaths after 21 not to have this effect). Let a conviction of crime on her own part, or on that of any member of her family, have the same effect; the period of recall to be proportionate to that offence; while fornication or adultery either on her own part or on theirs should deprive her of it altogether."

548. There is much in this argument, although as stated at paragraph 295, we are not, in view of the experience of Hawaii, prepared to adopt it in its entirety. Nor are we prepared to recommend the adoption of an artificial order of merit which, in view of the conservative character of the Fijians and their respect for hereditary institutions, would probably fail to be appreciated by the recipients—who would be ashamed (*madua*) of the commendation—or to command respect from others.

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FAMILIES.

549. But we think that some simple form of annual bounty might be granted to the parents of five living children. This is a matter that might be discussed by the Provincial Councils, with the view of arriving at a decision that would be satisfactory and acceptable to the people.

PREVENTION
OF THE
NEGLECT OF
CHILDREN.

VII.—PREVENTION OF THE NEGLECT OF CHILDREN.

550. This subject has already been embodied in a Native Regulation (No. 6 of 1892). The more efficient administration of these Regulations is dealt with under remedy No. XXXV.

ENCOURAGE-
MENT OF
GAMES.

VIII.—ENCOURAGEMENT OF GAMES.

551. Encouragement of Games is discussed at paragraph 326 as a remedy for "Lack of Discipline."

PROMOTION
OF MEASURES
FOR THE
AVOIDANCE
OF YAWS.

IX.—PROMOTION OF MEASURES FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF YAWS.

552. Promotion of measures for the avoidance of yaws has been considered in connection with the subject "Yaws (*Coko*)," *vide* paragraphs 472—474, and definite proposals are therein made which do not require further comment from us, beyond an expression of our conviction that this is one of the first remedial measures to which practical effect should be given.

Marital.

Marital.

553. The proposed remedies which have primary reference to the marital condition of the people are two in number, viz. :—

Miscegenation and
Facilitation of Marriages.

MISCEGENA-
TION.

X.—MISCEGENATION.

554. Some twelve of the correspondents touch on this subject. To overcome the tendency of the race to breed in-and-in there are two alternatives. We can, as is suggested by more than one writer, either introduce men and women of other races to intermarry with the Fijians, or we can take steps to encourage intermarriage between distant tribes within the limit of the Colony.

555. History has shown that the races which exhibit the strongest vitality are those which are composed of an intermingling of two peoples—the victors and the conquered. Whenever a people has, so to speak, by breeding within itself acquired the right to be considered as of pure blood, its decline in vitality may be said to have begun. The Fijians, however, show all the characteristics of a mixed race. Situated geographically on the border-line between the light and dark skinned races of the Pacific, the islands have been the trysting-place of the two peoples. The Fijians have no inherent objection to intermarry with Tongans; but it cannot be concealed that the amalgamation of members of these races, even so early as in the second generation, has produced defects that stamp it as an unsuitable means for renovating the worn-out stock. The mere crossing of races is not in itself necessarily beneficial. In some of the Lau islands, notably Lakeba, many of the people are half-breeds between the Tongans and the Fijians, and yet show a far greater tendency to strumous inflammations and degenerations than is found in either of the parent stocks. The offspring of European fathers and Fijian mothers are also markedly strumous, though this may perhaps be due to the tendency of Europeans to choose for wives the lighter-coloured women who are already tainted with scrofula, although its signs may not be apparent. On the other hand, the cross between the African negro and the Fijian is, to judge from the few specimens that have come under our observation, strong, healthy, and vigorous. The offspring of Fijian and Solomon islanders has similar characteristics, though in a less degree.

556. The Fijians have had opportunity to mix with alien races other than the Tongans. For the past twenty years there have been at no time less than two thousand New Hebrideans and Solomon Islanders living among the Fijians, but the number of unions between the two races has been comparatively few. This, however, is doubtless accounted for in some degree by the fact that the number of Melanesian women in the Colony has always been very much smaller than that of the men, and that consequently the Melanesians had everything to gain, and the Fijians had all to lose by marriage between the races.

557. Though thirteen years have passed since the introduction of East Indian immigrants, and there are now over ten thousand coolies living in the Colony, only two cases of their intermarriage with Fijians have come under our notice. In their case also the possibility of reciprocal unions is limited—but not to the same extent as in the case of the Melanesians—for the females among the Indian coolies number some 30 per cent. of the whole. But the two races regard one another with undisguised contempt. The coolie speaks of the Fijian as a *jangali* (bushman), and the Fijian looks upon the coolie as a filthy, low-born creature, and a heathen. Medical officers, who have opportunities of judging, even assert that there is no prostitution between the races owing to repugnance on the part of the Fijian.

558. The natives have thus shown little inclination to intermarry with these aliens, and they have made little or no attempt to learn anything from their methods.

Many of the Indian coolies tend cattle, but the Fijians have shown no disposition as yet to profit by their example; although of late years we have heard them go so far as to commend the industry of some of their Indian neighbours, and even to buy milk from them for their tea, if not for their children.

Solomon Islanders and other Melanesians have settled in various parts of the Colony, and show, in the neatness of their villages and the industry which they devote to their plantations, a marked contrast to the Fijians among whom they live. In some cases these men voluntarily take their share in the communal work of the district and in contributing to the taxes, and on this account the Fijians often encourage them to settle among them, but they despise them too much to profit by the example of industry they set them; and, except in rare cases—in most of which pecuniary considerations doubtless prevail—regard intermarriage with them with aversion.

559. It is suggested by one writer that low-caste women from the hill countries of India might be introduced to intermarry with the Fijians. But in the first place the proportion of women to men in India is not much higher than among the Fijians themselves, and difficulty is generally experienced in making up the complement of 30 per cent. of women to accompany the male immigrants from India. In the second place it is to be feared that, if women alone were to be introduced, they would at once degenerate into a lower status than that of lawful wives, and the Government would find itself responsible for reducing them to the ranks of prostitution.

The only method that would carry any promise of success would be the introduction of families; but since the passage-money of each immigrant from India would cost a sum of £15, the Government would not be disposed to incur such an expense unless the experiment were certain to be successful.

560. The races which might most naturally be procured for admixture with the Fijians are represented by the Polynesian, the Melanesian, and the Tokalau peoples.

It has been pointed out that admixture with the Polynesian race does not produce a strong progeny. Among Melanesian peoples women are quite as scarce as among the Fijians; and, as they are in most places regarded as chattels, they could not be obtained except by purchase, which is out of the question. Moreover, if recruited, they would be appropriated by the male Melanesians.

In the southern portion of the Gilbert Group there is, we understand, a large population and no paucity of females. But we believe these people would not part with their women; and such of them as have been resident in Fiji have

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—
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TION.

no inclination to mix in any way with the native population, to whom moreover they are distasteful. In this matter, therefore, the native race can expect no assistance from its nearer neighbours.

561. In a recent pamphlet on the census of Hawaii we find it stated that there the half-caste population is looked on as "The hope of the future." In the year 1850 it is said there were 312 foreign men married to native women, and that there were, as the product of those unions, 558 half-caste children. In 1872 the number of half-caste children had risen to 2,487, and in 1890 to 6,186.

These half-caste families it is said are exceedingly large and are prolific in all the degrees of crossings, and also *inter se*. It is noted as conspicuous that the superlatively prolific crossings are those of half-white or half-Chinese girls with Chinamen.

This leads to the question whether the Mongolian element could be in any way depended on to assist the scheme of Miscegenation in Fiji; and after full consideration—not forgetting the fate of Japanese immigration to the Colony—we are of opinion that it could not.

562. We have already indicated that the most favourable admixture with the Fijians, judged by the progeny, appears to be found in the negro or dark African races; and, if it were practicable, we would advocate the introduction of Zulus or Kaffirs—not only on account of the value of their commixture with the Fijians—but, also, because living as they do on milk and leguminous and graminaceous foods, and understanding the care of cattle, they would teach the Fijians by example to reform their dietary.

563. It has been suggested to us that from the population of Barbados some assistance might be obtained. That island, of which the area is only 166 square miles—the area of the island of Taviuni is 217 square miles—contains a population of about 185,000, or about 175 people to every hundred acres of land. In Fiji there are only about two natives to every hundred acres of native land.

The natives of Barbados (male and female) are celebrated for their proficiency as agricultural labourers in the cane-fields of Jamaica and Demerara, whither they periodically emigrate for short seasons.

The density of the population of the island has necessitated the formation of a Board of Emigration for the purpose of arranging for the disposal to the best advantage of the surplus population.

The Barbadian would be a most acceptable immigrant to Fiji either as a plantation labourer or as an adjunct to the native population. In this Colony he could find both work and land, while the climate does not differ materially from that of his native island. The inherent vitality of his race might fairly be expected to rehabilitate the low energy of the Fijians, if the two races could be brought into contact. There is no antipathy on the part of the Fijian towards men of African race as there is towards East Indians and Line Islanders. Africans would, in fact, be favourably received.

564. The difficulties in the way of carrying out any scheme for the introduction of Barbadians are considerable. They would probably be found unwilling to leave the West Indies, and the distance to be travelled would entail heavy expense, while it might be found on their arrival in Fiji that they displayed no desire either to take up land or to associate with the native population. The first and the last of these difficulties could be proved only after actual trial. If it were found that the people would not leave the West Indies the experiment need be considered no further; but if that difficulty could be surmounted, we think steps should be taken to proceed with the experiment.

565. It would probably be found on application to the employers of immigrant labourers that they were willing to employ Barbadian labourers if they could be obtained. The cost of recruiting and bringing to the Colony some 500 or 600 Barbadians would not be much greater than the cost of recruiting and introducing Indian immigrants. They might be engaged for employment under indenture for a specified period, and with the right to a return-passage after a residence of from seven to ten years in the Colony. Provision might also be made whereby immigrants could

could commute their return-passage for a grant in land. The cost of return-passages might be met as in the case of Indian immigration. If the influx of Barbadians continued beyond the first importation, matters would be much simplified.

566. Any expense connected with the experiment that might not be fairly borne by the employers and the Return-passage Fund might perhaps be allowed to fall on the Polynesian Immigration Fund, which has outlived its original responsibilities and is capable of assuming others. The immigrants imported should as far as possible be in equal proportions of males and females—and preferably in families. This scheme may, as a whole, appear to be “Utopian,” and is perhaps impracticable, but we think it should be taken up, and not abandoned until that course is proved imperative.

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MISCEGENA-
TION.

XI.—FACILITATION OF MARRIAGES.

567. As an alternative to, or in combination with, miscegenation with a foreign element, it is advocated by a considerable number of the correspondents that steps should be taken to facilitate marriages between Fijians who are unrelated and belong to different parts of the Group, and also to remove the obstacles which at present exist to the marriage of native men and women who are so disposed. At paragraph 339 the remedial suggestions are summarised.

FACILITA-
TION OF
MARRIAGES.

568. We do not think that anything can be done, unless by the establishment of model villages, to bring together natives of different provinces so as to facilitate their intermarrying. But we think that native Chiefs should be continually counselled to encourage such marriages and also to encourage early marriages generally. It is necessary that such advice to native Chiefs should be frequently brought before them; and for this purpose it might be well to cause the following questions to be asked of each Buli at every Provincial Council, and each Town Chief at every District Council:—

- (1) Have any marriage licenses been applied for and refused in your district (or town) since last meeting?
- (2) If so, what are the names of the parties?
- (3) How do matters now stand with regard to each of them?
- (4) Have you been able to encourage any marriages between natives of your district (or town) and those of distant parts of the Colony?
- (5) Is there, or has there been since last meeting, any trouble or dissension in your district (or town) with regard to proposed marriages?
- (6) Have any people been prevented from marrying who wished to do so?

569. We are further of opinion that section 1 of Regulation No. 3 of 1883 should be repealed.

The tenor of the section is as follows:—

“For the better observance of the manners and customs of the land in regard to marriage relationships, it shall be the duty of the Stipendiary Magistrate, or of the Buli if application be made to him in any town distant from the Stipendiary Magistrate, after putting question 7, viz.,—‘Have you and the woman personally conversed about your marriage?’—to inquire if there is any reasonable objection to the marriage on the part of the Mataqali of either side of the applicants, and it shall be the duty of the head of his Mataqali to see that the customs and ceremonies are duly performed.”

Many of the objections that weigh with a Fijian against the marriage of a relation are of a trivial nature, many of them have their root in inherent dislike to an alliance with an unrelated or distant family, and some of them proceed from the guiding principles of pre-Christian times.

We think therefore that they should not receive the semblance of legal sanction which is accorded to them by the foregoing provision.

570. In connection with this subject we would remark on the question of Divorce—a remedy for social inharmonies which the natives are far too prone to invoke—that the Chiefs should be counselled to spare no pains towards promoting reconciliation where it can legitimately be done.

With this view we think the questions should be asked of every Buli and Town Chief at each meeting of the Provincial and District Council respectively:—

- (1) Have any divorces been applied for in your district (or town)?
- (2) In how many cases have you succeeded in promoting reconciliation?

Domestic.

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PROPOSED.*Domestic.*

Domestic.

571. The next three measures to which we think attention should be given are closely interwoven with each other, viz.:—

IMPROVEMENT
OF THE
CONDITION OF
WOMEN.BETTER CARE OF
PREGNANT,
LYING-IN, AND
SUCKLING
WOMEN.HYGIENIC
MISSION BY
EUROPEAN
WOMEN.

XII.—IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF WOMEN.

XIII.—BETTER CARE OF PREGNANT, LYING-IN, AND SUCKLING WOMEN.

XIV.—HYGIENIC MISSION BY EUROPEAN WOMEN.

572. The essence of our suggestions under these headings, which we have, somewhat loosely, be it admitted, classed as “Domestic” is a proposal for the ministration to women by women, in such a manner as will best provide for relieving their present ills while it may also serve to instil into the Fijian mothers those necessary habits of cleanliness and sanitary tact to which they are in great measure strangers.

573. It has been pointed out, at paragraph 107, that the women of the Lau and Lomaiviti provinces live under conditions differing from those of the leeward parts of the Group in not being required by their lords, or their customs, to perform agricultural labour—a difference brought about by the prevalence of a purer Polynesian type to windward, due to Tongan immigration. And we have shown that after all, no great advantage seems to accrue to the former over the latter, believing that it is not so much a question of work as one of frivolity and a weakening of moral fibre arising out of the removal of the restraint born of physical fear, by which the whims and wantonness common to the women used to be controlled. For the improvement of the domestic status of the Fijian women and the practical amelioration of the numberless little ills by which their daily life is surrounded, and also for the safeguarding of the children during their critical age, we have proposed the establishment of a Ladies’ Hygienic Mission. The value we attach to this proposal may be gauged by the number of allusions we have found it necessary to make to it in the body of the Report;* and need not now be further asserted. The practical evolution of the scheme, however, is beset by many difficulties; and we do not, confined as we are by our isolated position to a limited field of observation, feel so competent as we could wish to present a complete working outline for its realisation.

574. We would draw attention, however, to the following points which our familiarity with the habits and failings of the natives prompts us to believe are imperatively called for:—

- (1) The Mission should be founded by the Government of the Colony for the specific purposes indicated. The necessary expenses should be defrayed out of the general revenue of the Colony: with the reservation that donations, if offered, might be accepted and applied to the purposes of the Mission. It should be regulated and controlled by the Government of the Colony.
- (2) The members of the Mission should be associated together by some constitutional tie, preferably of a devotional character.
- (3) They should have received a thorough obstetrical training in some recognised lying-in institution. They should possess a fair competence as medical and surgical nurses as well. They should undergo a further special training at the Colonial Hospital on their arrival, in the more common ailments to which the natives are peculiarly liable and in the native customs, personal habits, and language.
- (4) A practical knowledge of hygiene, drugs, domestic economy, and cookery: an aptitude for acquiring languages, and the very important personal qualities of gentleness, neatness, conspicuous cleanliness of person and dress, forbearance and patience, should weigh in their selection; and would indeed be necessary attributes. To ensure the possession of these the sisters should

* *Vide* paragraphs 104, 117, 370, 373, 387 (3), 403 (3), 410, 423 (6), 446, 458 (5), 500, 511, 534 (5).

should be sought for amongst ladies impelled by religious considerations to take up such a work, which they must understand will involve a very considerable degree of self-denial and disregard of personal comfort, besides some risk to health.

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WOMEN.

- (5) Their duties should be to devote themselves entirely to the work in hand, by living from time to time among the natives in the natives' own houses, attending the women in their confinements, visiting and relieving the sick, caring for the children, ingratiating themselves with the adolescents, and taking every opportunity of performing kindly offices for all ranks as practical object lessons, advising, instructing, and persuading the while, as best they may. The sisters would be required to visit the principal villages in their districts at regular intervals, staying for some days in each village, in order to encourage and advise the women in all matters connected with their household management, the care of their children, the maintenance of their own health, and the preparation of their food. They would specially devote themselves to winning the confidence of the "wise women" in order to discourage the indiscriminate use of native herbs, and to inculcate more rational methods of treatment. They would endeavour to attend as many confinements as possible in order to put their teachings in practice in the presence of the native midwives. They would endeavour to improve the diet of both mothers and children by teaching the women the use of milk. And lastly they would instil into the minds of the natives generally the difference between cleanliness and dirt, in their villages, their houses and their cookery.
- (6) A Home should be formed for them at Suva to which they might come for rest and change and to recruit their health as often as necessary, say for one month out of every four; and to it a training school for native midwives and nurses should be attached, under the guidance of the medical staff.
- (7) A station for two or three sisters should be provided as a Provincial Home at each provincial hospital, and perhaps a few other fixed residences might be found needful. These dwellings should serve as models for the natives to copy. But a few of the sisters should also travel from village to village and have no fixed residence while on active duty.

575. The success of such a scheme would, of course, depend chiefly upon the personal characteristics of the ladies engaged in it. They must be borne up by devotion to the work, for they would be disheartened by repeated disappointments; they must have an inexhaustible store of patience, for the Fijians have neither love nor respect for one who is easily provoked; they must be resourceful and self-reliant, for they would be stationed in isolated spots without sympathetic companions to help them to bear cheerfully the hardships of their lives; and lastly they must have robust health, for a delicate woman would be incapacitated by the life she would have to lead.

576. These are qualities seldom to be found combined in a single individual, and perhaps the most rare will be that of devotion to the work itself in spite of the many distasteful conditions that surround it. Devotion to such a cause is more readily to be found among the members of a religious body than among those of a purely secular organisation, who in place of the motives founded in religious fervour must, for their incentive to exertion in the teeth of opposition, depend on mere abstract philanthropy.

577. Or, in order to secure the Sanitary Mission against the dangers of sectarianism, either from within or from without, it might be necessary that the sisters should be members of some lay body such as the Zenana Mission in India, organised through the efforts of Lady Dufferin: and we recommend that in the selection of suitable persons the co-operation of that or of some similar body in England should be invited.

The hardships and difficulties of the life must not be under-estimated. We propose that in the chief villages of Kadavu, Macuata, Ba, Bua, Cakaudrove, Ra, Tailevu,

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Tailevu, and as many other provinces as might afterwards be added, two or more of these sisters should be stationed. If the number of the sisters permitted, it would in every way be better that two or three should live together at each station.

578. Besides the personal qualities we have enumerated as essential to success we must add that of tact. As the mission is to affect the home lives of the people mere admonition and orders to reform will only arouse irritation and opposition, unless the entire confidence of the natives have first been won and their minds opened to the necessary degree of receptiveness. The policy to be pursued must be found in advice and example from one who aspires to be a sympathetic equal rather than an alien superior clothed in the authority of Government.

579. We do not think that we are over-sanguine in our belief that this scheme would be attended with a success far more than compensating for its cost. We have, it is true, laid great stress in another part of this Report on the disheartening indifference of the Fijians to measures of reform adopted for their benefit, and in their passive resistance to all forms of improvement that call upon them for the slightest exertion or discomposure; but it is to be remembered that the Government has hitherto contented itself with putting the requisite sanitary knowledge within their reach, and with providing penalties for disobedience to the sanitary regulations. The enforcement of these penalties has been left to the natives who hold official positions, but who are for the most part as sceptical and indifferent about European sanitary methods as are the great body of their people. No systematic attempt has as yet been made to approach the people themselves through the medium of Europeans, and, if the success of such an experiment be doubted, let the experience of the Missionaries be considered. Armed with no authority they succeeded in a few years in striking at one at least of the bases on which old Fijian society rested—polygamy—and entirely abolished it by the mild expedient of surrounding it with disabilities for church-membership. Their sole weapon was persuasion and example; and they won the contest by allying with themselves as native teachers the most intelligent of their new converts who could reach communities they could never hope to influence with the limited means at their command. We advocate the adoption of precisely the same means. Each sanitary mission station would send out into the surrounding country native women trained by the sisters, and a measure of the success won by the missionaries would assuredly be the result. We should expect no sudden reform nor perhaps any marked difference in the death-rate for several years, but a change for the better would none the less surely be developing. We look to this scheme for the means of putting many of our recommendations into practice. We look to it to see that mothers do not leave their children for hours while they are working in the bush or fishing in the sea. When the mother's absence from home is unavoidable it is the sanitary sisters who will insist that the child shall be left in the care of a suitable person. They will watch over the diet of infants whose natural food has failed. Through them the women will be trained in the use of milk. We look to them to inculcate the habit of feeding sick persons upon wholesome diet and at proper intervals, and to induce the healthy to lead more regular lives and be more steadily industrious. From them we may also hope that the education and moral training of the Fijians may be of a purer kind, and that their pleasures will be found in innocent amusements rather than in sensuality. Though the realisation of all of these hopes may be delayed for many years we do not doubt that some reform may be looked for as soon as the working of the Sanitary Mission has been thoroughly established. The details of the system can only be filled in when experience has indicated the best methods to be pursued.

580. No such scheme can be initiated without cost; but, we believe that, if the cost of each station does not exceed £250 a year, the Treasury would in the end have no reason to complain of the scheme financially. For some time past the population has been decreasing without a corresponding decrease in the assessment of native taxes. Within the next few years the decline in the number of the taxpayers will have to be taken into account. Every native life saved will be of direct future benefit to the revenue and we are, therefore, even able to urge the trial of this scheme on the lowest ground—that of financial expediency.

Alimentary.

*Alimentary.*REMEDIES
PROPOSED.

Alimentary.

GREATER AT-
TENTION TO
FOOD PRO-
DUCTION AND
GARNERING.PREVENTION
OF THE
WASTE OF
FOOD.CHANGE OF,
AND IM-
PROVEMENT
IN, THE FOOD
STAPLE.

XV.—GREATER ATTENTION TO FOOD PRODUCTION AND GARNERING.

XVI.—PREVENTION OF THE WASTE OF FOOD.

XVII.—CHANGE OF, AND IMPROVEMENT IN, THE FOOD STAPLE.

581. These matters have been fully dealt with at paragraphs 248—250 and 255 and 256 of this Report.

Our conclusions are as follows :—

- (1) That while it cannot be said that Fijians suffer from a lack of provisions, as far as quantity is concerned, their diet is inadequate in quality, especially as regards food for mothers and young children.
- (2) That the supply of the better kinds of food available is often irregular owing to the increased consumption and waste of food at feasts.

And our recommendations—

- (1) That the planting regulation should be strictly enforced by giving, if necessary, a portion of the fine to the informer; or by appointing, as hereafter recommended, a European officer in each province, who would have the supervision of sanitary matters, and would prosecute in all cases of neglect of the Native Regulations.
- (2) That the *tabu* on cocoanuts should never be held to prevent the use of cocoanut for food in moderation, especially by mothers and young children, and that it should be removed as soon as each village has completed its assessment of taxes, instead of being kept in force, as frequently happens, until the district or, in some instances, the province has paid the full amount.
- (3) That to provide for the supply of cocoanuts in the future, the Government should compel the natives to plant trees annually and to attend to the subsequent weeding of them.
- (4) That the waste of food at native meetings should be discouraged.
- (5) That every effort should be made by the Government, through the medium of the Councils and the newspaper *Na Mata*, to encourage the natives to keep live stock, especially fowls and goats, and to use their flesh and also pork as regular articles of diet. The same efforts might be directed to encouraging the use of cereals, such as rice and maize as indicated in paragraph 250 (to which we would add millet), also the increased cultivation of the plantain, and the use of beans and lentils. We also recommend that settlers should be allowed to trade as country bakers without being required to pay a license fee.
- (6) That generally, natives should be encouraged to live better, to pay more attention to the variety of their food, to see that nursing-mothers in particular are well fed, and that they are provided with abundance of albuminous food, either in the shape of cocoanut preparations, or meat, or soups, and to be careful that their children have a sufficiency and variety of diet, and also that they be fed more than once or twice a day, with as much approximation to regularity as the people are capable of.

582. We may add that of recent months there are indications that natives are beginning to understand the desirability of cultivating rice. The cleaning of this cereal may be found troublesome, but until facilities for its transport to and from the mill are developed, the producers might be encouraged to use the primitive form of mortar and pestle which their Indian neighbours employ.

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—
CHANGE OF,
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IN, THE FOOD
STAPLE.

583. Attention should be given to the cultivation and use of beans, lentils, and leguminous products generally, as presenting far higher nutritive qualities than the merely starchy foods which are now the staple.

584. It is very desirable that the use of maize-meal or some variety of millet be popularised, either as porridge or in the form of loaves or puddings as mentioned at paragraph 250 hereof.

585. We are of opinion that the inherent physical weakness of the race is very largely due to the nature of their staple food; and we think that attention given to increasing the variety of native food-stuffs would be repaid in the improved stamina of the people which is likely to result from it.

ATTENTION
TO THE
SOURCES OF
WATER
SUPPLY.

XVIII.—ATTENTION TO THE SOURCES OF WATER SUPPLY.

586. Except in some of the small and outlying islands, the alluvial tracts, on certain argillaceous soils, and about two-thirds of the coast-line of Navitilevu, including the river deltas, there is an abundance of good water sources in the country; but the quality of the supply to most villages is undoubtedly suspicious, and in a very large number indeed, both source and supply are utterly bad. Suggestions for improving it have been quoted at paragraphs 251—254; and we therefore now only briefly recapitulate them.

587. We recommend:—

- (1) That the natives should be induced to pay for the laying on of water in pipes wherever this appears to the sanitary authorities to be expedient, and that where this is not practicable the Government should see to proper wells being sunk, the cost in either case being borne by the communities benefiting by these improvements.
- (2) That separate accommodation for bathing and washing clothes be provided.
- (3) That regulations be drawn up and submitted to the Native Regulation Board for conserving the water sources and points of supply of villages, and for the provision of proper drainage for the waste water.
- (4) That a special village constable be appointed in every village to have charge of the water-supply and its administration, subject, through the Roko, to the orders of the Commissioner for Native Affairs.

Clinical.

Clinical.

PROVISION
OF DIET FOR
INVALIDS.

XIX.—PROVISION OF DIET FOR INVALIDS.

588. The foremost need in this respect is the introduction of milk as an article of diet among the Fijians. It has been advocated and discussed in connection with the question of Infants' Food (paragraphs 445–6 and elsewhere). It is no less important for sick adults, especially in view of the large proportion of cases of disease of the bowels. Biscuits of good quality are now procurable at every country shop as well as in the European towns. So is flour, which can be made into pap. So is rice; and as the ease and success with which the latter may be cultivated become more widely known among the natives its use will be popularised. The prejudice with which most Fijians looked upon this grain a few years ago—as “food for coolies”—is now being supplanted by a more rational and favourable opinion of it, especially in those places where it is already grown, as at some of the magistrates' stations, and on allotments rented by Indians.

589. The Fijian will not eat an egg; and, except when ill, does not care for fowls (which he says are only suitable for women and white men). There is no reason why fowls should not be more largely used, and encouragement in this direction might be accompanied by endeavours to reform the present wasteful and unappetising method of cooking them.

590. A series of articles in *Na Mata* might be published on invalid diet and cookery, and leaflets should at the same time be struck off for general distribution.

The manual proposed in paragraph 496 (4) should include this subject.

591.

591. The Resolution requiring *Turaga ni koro* to see that a stock of arrowroot is made and maintained in villages for the use of the sick has been grossly neglected. One Native Medical Practitioner indeed, Ratu Temesia, has given much attention to this, and has repeatedly reported the general heedlessness in this respect. He has also exhorted the chiefs of villages to be more particular about it, and has endeavoured to improve the methods of preparing and keeping it. It is undoubtedly a wise measure and should be better enforced. The substitution of pure drinking-water for the present indifferent qualities employed would be an important dietetic advance.

REMEDIES
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—
PROVISION
OF DIET FOR
INVALIDS.

XX.—MEDICAL CARE AND NURSING.

MEDICAL
CARE AND
NURSING.

592. Our recommendations under this head have been expressed in some detail at paragraphs 495 and 496. With these must be read our conclusions under paragraphs 274, 399, 458, 473–4, relating to Insanitary Dwellings and Domestic Habits, Crèches, Yaws, Bowel Diseases, and in other sections.

We recommend—

- (1) The establishment of Provincial Hospitals.
- (2) A closer relation between the Native Medical Practitioners and the District Medical Officers, by associating both these orders with the Provincial Hospitals.
- (3) Perpetually recurrent post-graduate courses of residence and instruction at the Colonial Hospital for Native Medical Practitioners.
- (4) The adoption of the English language for medical tuition in place of the vernacular, which is found to be quite inadequate and unsuited for scientific explanations and descriptions.
- (5) The establishment of a Ladies' Hygienic Mission advocated under several other headings (*vide* paragraphs 572—580).
- (6) The institution of a nursing-school for Fijian women (which should include a practical course on midwifery and one on cooking, and might be conveniently presided over by the Sanitary Sisters elsewhere suggested).
- (7) The preparation of a pamphlet or handbook dealing with social and sanitary matters, dirt and its consequences, food and drink, the treatment of simple ailments, *coko*, and the nursing and dietary of invalids and infants.
- (8) The promulgation of measures recommended by frequently reading out the laws and sanitary advice in public, at the District Councils and village schools.

Disciplinary.

Disciplinary.

XXI.—EDUCATION AND MORAL TRAINING.

EDUCATION
AND MORAL
TRAINING.

Our views on this subject are set forth at paragraphs 322—328.

593. It must be accepted as an axiom that the present generation of Fijian fathers and mothers is incapable of materially assisting, at any rate of its own accord, in the discipline of the children,—the parents themselves having received no training in their youth. To effect a beginning in home discipline must be a very difficult task when the effort is spread over the 1,400 villages of the Colony: and it appears to be one in which certain collateral assistance is indispensable. One of the modes by which we propose to facilitate the introduction of a new order of things in this respect is our scheme for the “Concentration of Villages”—a change which should lead to improved efficiency in the schools, and permit of the substitution of separate schools for boys and girls, under superior teachers. By this means also the interest of the provincial officers would be more easily enlisted in the regular attendance of children and in the general advantage and value of the schools. And the influence of games could be regulated. Finally, inspection, now almost impracticable, would be largely facilitated both as regards school teaching and family or home training.

XXII.—

XXII.—REGULARITY OF LIVING.

594. We fear the experiment suggested by the writer of Paper No. 12 —*Enclosure No. 2*,—interesting no doubt, would be too hazardous even if practicable. But the system of land tenure stands in the way of giving it a sufficiently full trial.

595. We recommend a stricter administration of the Native Regulations, which can only be ensured by more efficient inspection. Adequate inspection can only be provided if the small villages be agglomerated into properly organised towns—as recommended under the heading “Concentration of Villages.” Altered conditions will give rise to new legislative requirements, which can be supplied when wanted.

XXIII.—MORE STEADY WORK.

596. Probably the most civilising agency which, under guidance, the Fijian is capable of producing by the labour of his hands is—roads. Concurrently with the concentration of villages there must result an extension of the system of roadmaking already begun by some of the Magistrates and Commissioners of the Colony, notably by the writer of Paper No. 9. We say, emphatically, that we should like to see this perfected and widely developed.

597. If by degrees the natives adopt a diet of cereals in the place of the more perishable and uneconomic root-food upon which they now principally depend, a supply of labour would thereby be liberated which might be turned to great advantage in the first instance in making roads from district to district. Intercourse, social, commercial, and educational, would by this means be facilitated and invited. If the native could be induced to raise grain crops (*vide* Paper No. 48), his gain, both physical and mental, would more than requite him for the time and labour expended. Cultivation of the soil would afford him a higher form of occupation for his mind than his present primitive and labour-wasting fashion of growing yams; and it would tend to develop his reasoning powers, as well as to favourably affect his vitality. The need for manure would be an inducement to keep and to properly tend cattle, either as beasts of burden or as sources of milk supply. Mr. Peat's suggestion that property resulting from such innovations might be exempted by law from the encroachment of the customs of *kerekere* and *tabu* is one which we deem worthy of much consideration, and recommend for tentative trial. Surplus produce could be raised by those not engaged on the roads, which could be conveyed by carts, or on ponies, or buffaloes, and be sold or bartered for the mutual convenience and advantage of the parties. By means of roads political administration, inspection of all kinds, and the spread of sanitary examples and precepts, would all be forwarded in a degree which, under present circumstances, is not to be thought of as within the range of practicabilities.

598. It may be hoped that the Native Industrial School, which is being reconstituted, will do much to afford object lessons to the natives in the utility of the handicrafts to be taught there, and so will popularise labour and encourage parents to send their sons for apprenticeship. Native craftsmen will by this means become enabled to earn money for themselves, and the desire for the acquisition of a circulating medium which will not perish by being saved up (as most native property or *yau* inevitably does) is one which is becoming daily more felt by the people individually, and more likely than ever to become a civilising agent.

599. But all such developments must be a work of time, and while we recommend that their evolution should be facilitated as much as possible, we should condemn any measures for forcing the process,—(*vide* paragraph 173). Amongst other and subsidiary improvements or economics in labour and the arts, we would mention the potter's-wheel, which we think should be introduced through the medium of the Native Industrial School; and the quern as suggested by Mr. Peat in Paper No. 48, which should accompany the introduction of cereal foods.

XXIV.—SUBVERSION OF THE COMMUNAL SYSTEM.

600. We have reviewed, at paragraphs 118 *et seq.*, the alleged defects and the proposed remedies quoted by twenty-six contributors to the Replies to the Circular in respect to the Communal System, in which the social economy of the natives is comprised.

In paragraph 140 we have stated our reasons for not accepting modern ("European") civilisation as a model on which to mould an ideal system for the Fijians.

Further, in paragraph 174 (1) and (4), we have recorded our conclusion, after weighing the views of the contributors, and bringing to bear our personal knowledge of the system, the reasons for its existence, and the details of its working, that the proper exercise of authority by the chiefs in requisitioning the labour of the people and the property of the tribe for communal purposes has no bearing upon the decrease of the population, and is in fact practically indispensable.

601. We have therefore had to consider whether any change in the present prevailing manner of applying certain communal customs, such as personal *lala*, *kerekere*, and *solevu*, would be likely to prove beneficial in the direction of checking the numerical decrease of the race.

Seeing that there are 186 provincial chiefs or prefects (*Roko*) and chiefs of districts (*Buli*), besides a large number of persons possessing hereditary rank and privileges although not in the employ of the Government, we think that it would be a very surprising thing indeed, if it could be truthfully asserted that all these natives are morally just and habitually upright in character. It is more reasonable to expect, as is in fact the case, that neglect of obligations and abuses of power or privilege should from time to time occur.

602. But we feel it impossible to make any sweeping recommendation with regard to the communal system, being convinced that the time has not come when it could be actively interfered with without seriously imperilling the very existence of the race.

We think, however, that the natural evolution of the race should be continuously and gently assisted along expedient lines without being forced into any particular groove; and we would in this connection reiterate the recommendation made at paragraph 285 of this Report, that advantage should be taken of the system as it now exists to build substantial and permanent houses, and thus pave the way for individual responsibility, and provide against the time when a man will not be able to claim the co-operative assistance of his neighbours in such a work. An example of the neglect of this precaution in Tonga is cited at paragraph 137.

603. We would advise, however, that the right of chiefs to personal *lala* be, after due inquiry, registered; and that its exercise be restricted to those entitled to it.

We think that such rights could only be abolished with justice, on the principle of compensation; and that a scheme for compensation on the basis of grants of land or money might be submitted to the people of a single province as an experiment.

604. The native custom of *kerekere* appears to us exacting and pernicious, and not an indispensable adjunct to the communal system, although it is doubtless an elemental part of the institution as it exists. We believe that it will always retard the development of thrift, and will exercise a dangerous check on any desire for the acquisition of personal property which the gradual progress of the people must, but for *kerekere*, tend to disseminate. And we see no reason why any ordinary transaction of borrowing and lending property, to be duly returned according to promise given, should not fulfil all the requirements which *kerekere* now satisfies, without being attended also by its disadvantages. We therefore think that every effort should be made to discourage the native custom of *kerekere* and to bring it into contempt.

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SUBVERSION
OF THE
COMMUNAL
SYSTEM.

605. As regards *solevu*, we have recommended in paragraph 174 (6) that these presentations, distributions, and exchanges of property, should be allowed to fall into desuetude, or at least should receive no encouragement from the Government; but we do not suggest that this recommendation extend to the smaller *solevus* or so-called markets, which grow out of the commercial necessities of two or more small communities.

CREATION OF
INCENTIVES
TO INDUSTRY,
STIMULI TO
EXERTION,
MOTIVES FOR
THRIFT.

XXV.—CREATION OF INCENTIVES TO INDUSTRY, STIMULI TO EXERTION, MOTIVES FOR THRIFT.

606. Seven writers of the Replies advert to the urgent need for some stimulus to lift the Fijians from their apathy and indifference, but only four of these indicate any definite course that will lead to the desired end. One indeed says that “to effect this change of life will be difficult—so difficult that I almost doubt its attainment.”

The suggestions are :—

- (1) The abolition of the communal system, by which a healthy rivalry in the acquisition of property will spring up.
- (2) The encouragement of trade.
- (3) The substitution of a feudal tenure of land for the ancient communal one now existing.

607. As regards the first of these proposals we have already stated our belief that the evils lie less in the calls for the labour of the commune than in the custom of *kerekere* (borrowing or begging), which cannot be checked by legislative enactment.

608. The correspondent who urges the encouragement of the trading instincts of the Fijians points to the district of Deuba where 205 people enjoy a net annual income of £2,000 from the sale of fruit and from rents. In this district there has been a slight but steady increase in the population. We readily admit that if the natives throughout the Colony could be induced to follow the example of the Deuba people the result would be a general increase. But the prosperity of Deuba is owing not only to a degree of enterprise on the part of the people themselves of which few of the other tribes seem capable, but also to exceptionally favourable conditions—in possessing land suitable for banana-growing within reach of the market, at a time when the profits of the industry were still high and the banana disease had not appeared.

Thus while we agree that before we can hope for the development of thrift and industry—qualities unknown to primitive man—new wants must be created in the Fijians, we believe that this end can only be attained by the spontaneous development of commerce.

609. The proposal to introduce a feudal tenure on the model of that founded by William the Conqueror in England is to be found on page 22 of the Replies as printed. Cleverly as the proposal is presented, we feel that it belongs rather to the domain of theory than of practice, and that there are insuperable difficulties in the way of its universal application. We discuss, however, a modification of the idea under the head of “Establishment of Model Villages.”

And we think it possible that as the wants of the natives gradually change or increase, especially in the direction of food staples and domestic improvements, motives for thrift and stimuli to exertion will little by little develop of themselves.

Moral.

Moral.

MORE EFFECTIVE
DETERRENTS
AGAINST
CRIMINAL
ABORTION.

XXVI.—MORE EFFECTIVE DETERRENTS AGAINST CRIMINAL ABORTION.

610. Upon reference being made to the sections in which we have recorded our examination into the matters which relate to the prevalence of abortion it will be seen that we have only recommended that certain forms of native treatment be prohibited by Regulation, as indicated under the head of “Native Medical Treatment and Nursing;” and that the native officers, especially those of the provinces of Macuata,

Macuata, Bua, Cakaudrove, and Tailevu, and more particularly of all those in which a high still-birth rate is recorded, be stimulated to use greater diligence in bringing offenders to justice.

611. The forms of native treatment to which we allude and which we believe should be included within the prohibitions contained in such a Regulation are all those coming under the designation of digital or instrumental manipulation *per vaginam*, and massage of the abdomen in females,—*vakasilima* and *bobo* respectively.

We confess that we are not satisfied with the limited nature of that recommendation.

612. We do not suppose that a Native Regulation Board which advocated the continuance of *cokalosi*—[*vide* paragraph 491 (10)]—will readily consent to the abandonment of *vakasilima*. We have already mentioned (paragraph 358) that in respect to the causing of abortion or barrenness the law provides penalties sufficiently repressive if they could be enforced, but that enough evidence to warrant a prosecution seldom comes to the surface: and we do not expect that, this being so with regard to the administration of drugs and other direct means, a wholesome prohibition of most of the practices confided in by the patients (and a source of revenue to the large class of *yalewa vuku* or wise women) would be any the more efficacious for our purpose.

613. On a revision of the subject we are inclined to turn rather to educational means for a check on the prevalence of abortive practices. And we place more faith in measures directed to restrain the causes which tempt women to seek for abortion than in punitive enactments applicable only after the offence has been committed or attempted.

We have already (paragraphs 186, 354) shown that illegitimate conception is by far the commonest incentive to this crime. It is scarcely probable that the fear of such punishment as our laws can impose, will outweigh in the mind of a Fijian woman the motives by which she is swayed in wanting to rid herself of her unlawful burden. And the crime is so easily concealed. The woman who assists, being *particeps criminis*, is as much bound to secrecy as her patient.

It is rather upon means for abolishing the motive that we must concentrate our endeavours. Kindred subjects are touched upon in Divisions VI, XIX, and XXI of the Report: and in Proposed Remedies XI, XXI, XXII, XXXII, and XXXV.

In one of those passages (paragraph 346) we have mentioned that it seems not to be so much the abstract sinfulness of fornication about which parents or guardians concern themselves as the depreciation in value in the marriage market which a girl sustains when a previous pregnancy is publicly known to have occurred in her case. This depreciation often tells as regards the exchange of presents, in spite of the fact that the bridegroom, as stated, does not usually feel any shame in the matter.

614. The re-establishment of the *bure ni sa* might probably be of some service in restraining the premature intimacy between the young people of different sexes which has grown to be customary since its abandonment, and is a measure which we advocate should be tried, tentatively perhaps in one province; and subsequently, if successful, by legal enactment.

XXVII.—RELAXATION OF THE LAWS AGAINST FORNICATION AND ADULTERY.

615. Our views on these points are given at paragraphs 345—348 hereof.

We do not think that any change should be made in the law against adultery.

We recommend the following modification in the law relating to fornication: That the penalty for a male convicted of fornication be altered to “imprisonment for *any term not exceeding* three months”; that the female be exempted from prosecution,

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prosecution, but be not allowed to appear as a witness against her paramour; that upon marriage with the female the male be absolved from punishment; and that a clause be inserted in the body of the Regulation cautioning the Native magistrates, in sentencing offenders, to take into consideration the previous character of the woman with whom the accused committed the offence.

RESTRAINT
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XXVIII.—RESTRAINT OF THE PREVALENT IMMORALITY.

616. Among a people like the Fijians a certain amount of sexual immorality is to be expected, especially in view of the fact that the number of males predominates over that of females. We believe, however, that the sexual license of the Fijians is less than is found among many races that are increasing in numbers. But, unfortunately, sexual offences bulk largely in the mind of the people. The ordinary Fijian does not see a man and a woman walk together without suspecting evil, and, as a rule, setting himself to spy it out if it should exist or in any case to circulate rumours of it. As some children delight in seeing their fellows in trouble with parents or instructors, so the Fijian takes pleasure in seeing his neighbours place themselves within reach of ecclesiastical censure, to which he is ever willing to help them. The existence of so many self-constituted inquisitors tends to keep the fear of falling ever before the people, and probably to whet the appetite for sexual intrigue, while the fear of detection doubtless leads to the practice of abortion by the administration of emmenagogues, or echolics (of which every woman appears to know a variety), or mere irritants, or if all else fail, by mechanical means.

617. This evil has its root in the minds of the people, and can only be restrained by the progress of education and civilisation, which must take time. But we think it would be a fortunate circumstance if by any means the attention of the natives were less concentrated on social lapses, for, we believe, their sexual desires are stimulated less by actual pruriency than by familiarity with the idea of sexual impurity.

618. So far as penal enactments can be depended on to make a people moral we have discussed the subject at paragraphs 345–8 of this Report, and have given our recommendations at paragraph 615 hereof.

In another place we have suggested that the re-establishment of the village *bure ni sa* or men's sleeping-place be tried in one province.

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Administrative and Sanitary.

INCULCATION
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XXIX.—INCULCATION OF SANITARY PRINCIPLES.

619. In this is comprised one of the most difficult tasks which education has to achieve; not merely among coloured races, but also in Europe and elsewhere. It involves breaking down the old barriers opposed by ignorance and superstition, and cannot be effected suddenly. In our own country, which has taken the lead in such matters, its active progress has occupied nearly a century and is not yet complete, while passive improvements began to exert an influence much longer ago. It has already been begun among the Fijians, both by educational and legislative processes.

620. We recommend that this work should be continued and assisted by the preparation and circulation of a small handbook of practical hygiene, personal, domestic, and communal or urban. From such a manual, however, it would be idle to expect the principles of sanitation to become popular with the body of the natives, because their minds are not sufficiently open to the rudimental truisms of every-day physical knowledge to be able to assimilate such teaching. Moreover they are slow to profit by any exhortations couched in general terms, on no matter what subject, being by nature incredulous and also inactive, and therefore tenacious of the habits to which they have grown accustomed from their childhood. The
manual

manual can therefore unfortunately be only directory; but, to make up for the omission of theoretical teaching, it should abound in detail.

Endeavour should be made to introduce it into all the schools, whether denominational or Government institutions; as it is only among the young generation, before the superstitions of their elders have become rooted in their minds, that we can expect it to obtain consideration.

Use should also be made, however, of the fact that some of the superstitions and a part of the ancient cult of the people were directed to sanitary ends, whether they were aware of it or not; this should be turned to account by way of illustrating the soundness of more modern precepts and *tabus*, now that the older methods can no longer be enforced as such.

621. The compilation of such a manual may be left to the medical advisers of the Government; but we would suggest that it deal with:—

- Regularity in sleeping and eating.
- Bathing and washing.
- Dangers of damp and chill.
- Use and abuse of clothing.
- Diet of infants and children.
- Diet and cookery for invalids.
- Guides to the quality of water, and dangers of impure drinking-water.
- Sites for dwelling-houses and villages.
- Disposal of refuse.
- Use of castor oil and a few other simple medicines.
- Abuse of *yagona* and tobacco.
- Ventilation of dwellings.
- Exercise and physical training.
- Dirt and cleanliness.
- The use of soap.
- Sanitary guide to mothers while suckling.
- Baby-nursing.
- Vaccination.
- General treatment of invalids.
- Infection and contagion.
- Flies, as inoculating agents.
- Precautions with regard to whooping-cough, yaws, diarrhœa, dysentery, ulcers, influenza, ophthalmia.

622. The District Hospitals, Sanitary Sisters, and Native Practitioners would afford further means of inculcating the precepts so laid down. But, as we have already pointed out in more than one place, precept without example is of no avail in teaching a Fijian. For this and other reasons we place more confidence in the next five of our proposals for applying in practice the principles enunciated in such a Sanitary Manual than we do in mere perusal of the proposed handbook itself.

XXX.—IMPROVED SANITATION OF VILLAGES AND DWELLINGS.

623. We take the dwelling-house as the unit to which in the first instance reforms under this heading, constructive and administrative, should be applied. A full expression of our views on the present defects of native houses is given at (paragraphs 263—269); and we have thereafter (270—274) proceeded to suggest such changes as we believe to be called for. A summary of these proposals is given in the last-mentioned paragraph, to which we have nothing now to add except that wherever a new site is determined upon for the reconstruction of a village, an endeavour should be made to lay off the plots for the houses in something like regular alignment. We are aware that complications in the shape of ownership of the soil, position of the fruit-bearing trees, graves, and perhaps other considerations, are likely to outweigh, with natives, any mere abstract desire for alignment; but we think that such a desire should be cultivated and encouraged as much as possible

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as one means of helping to educate the native eye and mind into habits of regularity and precision, and also of ensuring a free circulation of air in the village.

624. We have elsewhere [paragraphs 256 (7) and Remedies, XVIII] stated our views regarding an improved water-supply for villages, but we may now conveniently reiterate (*vide* paragraph 500) our recommendation that the town-crier should, once a week, enjoin the people to observe cleanliness in all things,—in their persons, clothes, bed-places, mats, and utensils. We would add that this admonition should be followed by a weekly house-to-house inspection to be made by the *turaga ni mataqali*, against which the same objection could not be raised as if it were done by the *Turaga ni koro*.

IMPROVED
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XXXI.—IMPROVED VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION.

625. While, as at present, the internal administration of village affairs rests upon the shoulders of an annually elected *Turaga ni koro* and village constable, it must be idle to expect much excellence. There are cases in which a suitable man is re-elected year after year; but often enough he wearies of his responsibilities, and petitions the District Council to be relieved of the office. It is rare in fact for a *Turaga ni koro* to continue as such for more than four years; and it is a common thing to find very inferior men, incapable either through youth or from mere ignorance of the duties, holding this post of authority.

In this we see a weak point in the practice of village administration, though the system as a whole is perhaps the best that can be devised in the circumstances. Our proposal for the concentration of villages offers a means of overcoming this defect. It is unreasonable to expect that a man having the desirable degree of administrative ability should be found in each of the 1,400 villages and hamlets in the country willing and available to be put in authority over the rest. The principal difficulty in the administration of village affairs lies in the remoteness of so many of them, and the difficulty of access arising out of the want of proper footpaths or the absence of convenient waterways. Our "Concentration" scheme would also be the remedy for this.

626. For the rest we would depend upon the education and special training to be afforded by the Government Technical School, and we think that the children of all influential chiefs and heads of clans (*turaga ni mataqali*) who may be destined to succeed their parents in due course as government officials, should pass through a special training there. This however can only take effect in the case of the rising generation; and we therefore recommend that for the present at least every candidate for the office of constable, of *Turaga ni koro*, and for that of *Buli* too, should be required to subscribe to a printed schedule of the duties of the office, which should be read over to him in the presence of the Provincial or District Council. These duties are already partly indicated in the Native Regulations: but it is within our knowledge that many of the officials in question are ignorant of some of the most important ones which bear upon sanitary and other matters in villages.

Officers appointed to those posts should also be furnished with a printed statement of their duties, whether imposed by law or defined by the Department of Native Affairs; and a similar copy should be affixed to some convenient part of every Provincial Office, every Courthouse, and the dwelling of each District Scribe.

The responsibilities imposed by Regulation upon *turaga ni mataqali* should also be similarly published.

627. It is suggested by one of the correspondents that as far as possible greater recognition should be given to the monthly town and buliship *soqoni*, as they are about the only form of *vakavanua* meetings left, and are gatherings in which the direct voice of the people is heard, and through which orders to be effective and successful must reach them. Other correspondents appreciate the fact that the Fijian is addicted to the *cacoethes loquendi* and see a danger in encouraging him therein as he is disposed to regard such discussions as so much work and to consequently leave the manual labour to his womenkind. We think, however,

however, that the *Bose vakoro*, or Village Council, should be encouraged in its discussion and supervision of all village matters.

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XXXII.—CONCENTRATION OF VILLAGES.

XXXIII.—ESTABLISHMENT OF MODEL VILLAGES.

628. We have dwelt upon the injurious and unprogressive conditions that surround the natives, and upon the insouciance, improvidence, and disregard for the simplest laws of health which characterise this people. We have pointed out that the Native Regulations enacted to repress these tendencies, are, in so far as they trench upon native customs and inclinations, seldom, if ever, enforced. The remedies which we have recommended can at the best be only gradual in their action, because of the lack of practical means to enforce them against the *vis inertiae* of native conservatism.

629. We have frequently alluded in the foregoing parts of this Report to this proposal for establishing Model Villages, and we now proceed to sketch out the lines upon which we should like to see them formed. There should be at least two such model settlements, the one in the wet and the other in the dry part of the Colony, in which every indisputably salutary measure may be put into practice upon a body consisting of families specially selected for their physical and mental superiority over their fellows. The sites should be most carefully chosen, with the concurrence of a medical board, so as to combine the best sanitation with fertility and proximity to markets. We scarcely think that any of the Crown lands present all the required conditions, but suitable land for the purpose can easily be acquired from the natives by purchase at a nominal rate. One of the villages should be in the vicinity of Suva, and for this the sparsely populated valley of the Upper Waimanu or the coast lands belonging to the Bativudi clan suggest themselves. The second village should be situated either at Bua, Nadi, or Sabeto, in all of which places land can be acquired. They should each be under the control of picked European officers, married men, who are known to possess administrative ability, having sympathy with and interest in the natives. They would be responsible to the Governor through the Colonial Secretary and would be required to carry out the suggestions of the medical officer detailed to inspect the settlements at regular intervals. The houses would be built at first of native material; but permanent structures of concrete or stone, built by the people themselves, would be gradually substituted. For this purpose an Indian stonemason, and a native carpenter trained at the Technical School and acquainted with rough carpentering and shingle-splitting, would be attached to the settlement. Good and abundant water would be laid on to the village, and cleanliness and other sanitary practices be enforced.

The village school, in which a sound elementary education would be given, would be a preliminary training-ground for recruits for the offices filled by natives in the Public Service, to be afterwards supplemented by special teaching at the Government Technical School. Regularity in the hours of meals and of retiring to rest such as is unknown in native villages would be enforced.

630. The men would be taught economical agriculture, and encouraged to grow grain and to grind it in handmills into meal to be afterwards baked by their wives. The women would be exempt from all agricultural labour and from carrying firewood and water, but would be taught useful and domestic arts rather than laborious drudgery. The economy of the village would rest upon the profits made from selling surplus produce of all kinds in the local market, and the proceeds would be spent in the necessities of life that can be more cheaply purchased than manufactured on the spot. Cattle would of course be a feature, and the women would acquire the routine of dairy work and learn to feed their children upon milk.

631. Not only would the general sanitation of the settlement be most carefully attended to but yaws (*ekoko*) would not be allowed to gain a footing there.

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No person capable of communicating the contagion would be permitted to enter the settlement, but if, in spite of every care exercised to keep the children from associating outside with infected children of the surrounding villages, the disease should make its appearance the patient would be at once banished from the precincts of the settlement until cured. A crèche and an isolation ward would be maintained, with a properly trained native functionary attached to each.

632. We do not think that the apparent stringency of the routine to be enforced in these settlements would deter families from joining in the face of the advantages that they would enjoy. After having been passed by a medical officer each family would be granted a plot of land and a house allotment within the village on which to erect its dwelling. After a period of probation this land would be confirmed to its members on hereditary tenure unless they had either morally or physically become unfitted to remain within the settlement. Such persons would be gradually drafted out as occasion might require and the quality of the remainder be thus purged of its inferior elements and tend ever to become raised. A nursery for a new and purer stock would thus gradually be formed. Incentives to emulation among the inhabitants of the settlement might from time to time be devised as the experiment was developed.

633. The success of such a scheme would principally depend upon the class of families selected. We think that they should be taken as far as possible from different provinces so as to promote sound breeding between their children *inter se*, or with the natives of the neighbouring villages. They should be chosen for their known intelligence and physical health and they should have at least four children living in each family. They should be put under no compulsion to enrol themselves, but after they thoroughly understood the conditions of membership be allowed perfect freedom of choice. After a few months' trial we believe that applications for membership would become so general that there would be no difficulty in finding suitable persons to fill any vacancies caused by death or expulsion.

We do not rely merely upon the benefit such institutions would confer upon their inmates: on the contrary we believe that they would rapidly leaven the whole native population. The natives are emulous where their jealousies are excited, and so soon as the advantages of such an institution reach them by report or through the columns of *Na Mata* many of the chiefs would be spurred by envy to attempt to surpass them.

634. As the inhabitants of the settlements increased in numbers the younger families could be drafted out to form *nuclei* of sanitary and educational reform in the various native centres of the Colony. They should moreover be a community of the superior physical stamina which, it may fairly be expected, would result from freedom from yaws for two generations. And lastly a step will have been made in the direction of the recognition of individual property and the abandonment of the baneful custom known as *kerekere*, for it would be a stringent rule in the Model Settlement that *kerekere* be forbidden; and every means would be taken to prevent opportunities for its exercise from arising, even to the extent of establishing a *Mont de Piété* if necessary. If it be thought that we are over sanguine in our belief that the population of such settlements would increase, it should be remembered that whenever the discipline of health and of sick-nursing has been enforced under medical supervision the death-rate among the natives has been low. In the gaols, as we have already said, the mortality is infinitesimal. Even during the epidemic of measles in 1876 when the mortality of the entire native population reached the terrible figure of 26 per cent. in four months that of the Armed Native Constabulary was limited to 6 per cent. In the various Mission institutions, whose sites are not specially selected for reasons of sanitation, and where no special attention is paid to hygiene, we are assured that the mortality is less than in the native villages: and it is well known that natives, Melanesians, Fijians, and Indians alike, who are employed as domestic servants in Europeans' houses acquire a hardness of constitution and a capability of resisting disease which are almost unknown to the native dweller in his own haunts.

635. We have now to advise the adoption of a scheme without which we feel that none of the remedial measures we have already touched upon will have a fair chance of success. We refer to the gradual concentration of the people into larger and better managed villages than they now live in. We have entered very fully into the reasons which lead up to this proposal in part XIII of the Report—(*vide* paragraphs 275—286),—and we have therein also indicated some of the difficulties which must attend its execution. We have now to present a definite recommendation that a beginning should be made, by enlisting the co-operation of one or two of the more intelligent Heads of Provinces, the Roko Tui Cakaudrove, for instance, and the Assistant Commissioner for Ra, or the Roko Tui Bua, for the congregating of, say, a hundred families into one town in each of those provinces. All of them are decreasing alarmingly in population and would afford fair subjects in which to apply the change. The features of the new town should conform as nearly as may be to the plan we have advocated for the construction of Model Villages—except that in the former there would be but little opportunity for choosing the people on physical grounds, whereas in the latter such selection would form an essential factor in the experiments.

With these observations we pass on to the consideration of our two final proposals.

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XXXIV.—EMPLOYMENT OF EUROPEAN OFFICERS INSTEAD OF NATIVE CHIEFS.

636. Eight writers, four of whom are unconnected with the Government, advocate the substitution of European officers for Native Chiefs in the control of sanitary matters. They urge with much force that since the natives are themselves incapable of comprehending the evils of insanitary conditions it is useless to expect that the Sanitary Regulations will be enforced by their agency. They point out that the hereditary chiefs lack the qualities necessary to make them good civil servants, and that, not being dependent upon their office alone for their influence or for their means of livelihood they are not readily amenable to discipline for irregularities. A further reason is adduced by two correspondents, both public officers, in the check that would be maintained upon the abuse of “*lala*” by inferior chiefs.

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The general suggestion is that a European Sanitary Inspector or a Mixed Board of Europeans and Natives—with power to enforce their orders—should be appointed to each province. One writer, however, suggests that a European officer should be placed between the Roko Tui and the Bulis as a kind of official adviser to the former in all executive matters. It is not directly suggested that the office of *Roko Tui* should be abolished in favour of that of European Resident Commissioner, but the remarks of more than one writer seem to suggest that such a change is desirable.

On the other hand a correspondent with nearly thirty years' experience of the natives, both as their official superior and as a private resident among them, declares emphatically that orders and regulations to be successful and effective, must reach the people through their Chiefs in District Council. “Direct orders from a magistrate or officer do little less than disturb and irritate. Whereas, if the same came through their natural and immemorial channel, they will be better understood and adapted to their abilities.”

637. It is not necessary here to set forth the reasons that led the Colonial Government to employ the hereditary chiefs as salaried officers and so to enlist them as agents of the Government rather than as possible opponents. For eighteen years the services of these men in controlling their people have relieved the Colony of the large expenditure for police that would otherwise have been necessary, besides affording a political security rare in the history of the government of native races.

But during the last few years many of the influential chiefs have died, leaving but a very small measure of their influence either for good or evil to their successors.

As the hereditary prestige becomes weaker, and the people grow to be more accustomed to the functions of Government, the prestige of office is daily becoming stronger. Those reasons of policy which rendered the employment of the hereditary chiefs indispensable during the few years that followed the Cession of the Colony are

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are therefore gradually diminishing in weightiness. But the weakening of the hereditary prestige is not yet so far advanced that a commoner clothed in the authority of office can outweigh the influence of the hereditary chief holding no official appointment, nor could any European officer successfully administer the government of certain of the provinces if the influence of the hereditary chiefs were exerted to oppose him. The *Buli* (heads of districts) and the *Turaga ni koro* (chiefs of villages) will always in our opinion be essential to the efficient government and the contentment of the people while their social system lasts. Besides being the official heads they are also the mouthpieces of the people, and mediators between them and the Government. As heads of the local council they are able by native methods to settle to the satisfaction of the people a vast number of disputes that would otherwise embarrass the administration whose decisions, as those of aliens imperfectly acquainted with native customs, would often be accepted by the people only under protest. But the experiment of appointing Europeans to be the executive heads of provinces has answered so well in the provinces in which it is now being tested that we are inclined to recommend that as the offices of *Roko Tui* fall vacant through death, and the hereditary successor is of secondary rank or for other reasons cannot be implicitly relied upon to discharge his duties with credit, commissioners should be appointed to fill these offices. The people would thus be relieved of all tenure service towards a Roko, and the substituted officer would be able to exercise on the spot a watchful control over any of the Bulis who might show a tendency to abuse the *lala*, and would use all his influence towards the material improvement of the people. Such commissioners might in the first place be chosen from the class of educated upright intelligent natives of whom a few—a very few—already exist; but during the next generation it would probably be found both possible and expedient to replace them by Europeans. We recognise, however, that exceptional qualities are required for the successful discharge of such duties, and that the mean between sympathy and firmness, toleration of native idiosyncrasy without the exaction (from motives of personal vanity) of native forms of respect, may not always be found united in the person of the officers at the disposal of the Government.

638. We think however that at the retirement of the present native officers in the provinces of Lau, Macuata, Bua, Ra, Ba, Serua, and Namosi, Europeans might advantageously be employed as commissioners in direct executive authority over the Bulis, provided that European officers can be found possessing the necessary qualities of patience and firmness, knowledge of native language and customs without having had former dealings with them in business pursuits, sympathy with native modes of thought without the wish to receive those native forms of respect to the spontaneous yielding of which only hereditary rank can lay rightful claim, and which really have their origin in ancestor worship. These qualities, essential to the successful administration of native races, are not often to be found combined in one individual, and to be effective must, moreover, coexist with the necessary physical strength and activity to ensure continual inspection of the districts.

Under efficient control abuse of power by the Bulis, now rare, would be unknown; and passive opposition to sanitary progress, now universal, would tend to cease.

MORE
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XXXV.—MORE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF NATIVE LAWS.

639. It is an undoubted truth that a number of the Native Regulations, especially those dealing with sanitation, are not enforced. Certain things are forbidden and certain duties are imposed; but while the former are not prevented, the latter are not enforced. It is stated that the questions put to each Buli at the half-yearly Provincial Council regarding the state of his district are answered by a formula invented by the chiefs themselves, and that it is nobody's business to investigate the truth of the satisfactory report given on these occasions. This fact we have ourselves heard cited in derogation and derision of the law, and of the Bulis as a body, by young and intelligent chiefs schooled at the Colonial Hospital. It is pointed out that the leading principle of the ancient institutions was the enforcing of customary law with a strong hand, and that therefore well-considered legislation will

will be useless unless the penalties attached to it be regularly applied. The soundness of this principle is also frequently attested by the better class of native magistrates and others. The Regulations quoted as being the most generally neglected are those regarding food-planting, the care of the sick, the storing of arrowroot, *yagona*-drinking (4 of 1885), the burdens carried by women (7 of 1885), house-building and the cleansing of villages. We confess that so long as the responsibility of prosecuting offenders against these Regulations is left with native officers who are not subject to punishment for neglect of duty, we cannot hope for amelioration in this respect.

640. The disinclination to prosecute offenders against these Regulations arises from two causes—the inability of any native to regard offences against sanitary laws as misdemeanours deserving punishment: and the fear of unpopularity. The latter arises out of the former. The native police charged with the duty of instituting prosecutions are, like all other natives, largely dependent upon the goodwill of their fellow-townsmen, and seldom institute a prosecution without instructions from the Buli. The Buli himself hesitates to court unpopularity that may end in a trap being laid for him so as to warrant a petition for his dismissal from office. Unless therefore an offence against the Regulations results in injury to an individual who complains, a prosecution is seldom laid. As a consequence a large body of the Native Regulations remains practically ineffective.

This state of things was probably foreseen at the time of Cession, for at that time European sergeants of police were stationed in several of the provinces; but these officers were gradually withdrawn, and only reappointed in the centres of the sugar-industry where their services do not extend to the native courts.

641. We would earnestly recommend the appointment of suitable persons as European officers of police in each province. Besides the ordinary routine of police work their duties should extend to the enforcement of sanitation in native villages, and the institution of prosecutions before District and Provincial Courts for offences against the Native Regulations, for which purpose they should have the supervision and control of the village police. The supervision of a European officer would result in a great improvement in the morale of the native (village) police who now suffer from having no official head, and are not in any sense a corporate force.

642. The duties that would fall to such a staff of European officers would embrace the application of the native laws and the proper attention to primary details of administration that have, nevertheless, a close bearing on the welfare of the population. The following points may serve as an illustration:—

Sanitation of villages, pig-keeping, drainage, surface-cleansing, &c.

Food-planting, and cultivation of trees of economic value.

Water-supply.

Building houses with proper *yavu*.

Institution of raised bedplaces.

Renewal of *co* or *sasa* as flooring material.

Supervision of distribution of tax refunds.

Inquiry into obstacles raised to marriages.

Detection of cases of abortion and fœticide.

Detection of improper levies.

Prompt adoption of necessary measures when inquests on infant deaths reveal irregularities.

Regulation of the *tabu* on cocoanuts so as to provide that there shall be no dearth of nuts for food purposes.

Proper provision of arrowroot for the sick.

Application of native laws as to pregnant women carrying heavy loads.

Neglect of children.

Abuse of *yagona*.

Employment of tobacco by children and suckling-mothers.

To give early notice of, and render assistance in, local epidemics.

To assist in the introduction of the use of milk, the segregation of yaws, &c.

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NATIVE
LAWS.

643. The officers to be appointed to this position should be selected from people well versed in the native language and customs, having knowledge of and sympathy with native manners without being themselves of the lotus-eater class. They might be attached to the Police Department, the Provincial Department, or to that of the Colonial Secretary. Some difficulty might be experienced in obtaining a sufficient number of officers with the necessary qualifications; but we feel confident that amongst the old colonists a sufficient number of active and trustworthy men could be found to make a commencement in the experiment. One objection will doubtless be the expense involved; but we do not think that insuperable, believing as we do that, unless such a measure is taken in hand, the Treasury will soon begin to suffer, to at least an equal extent, from diminution in revenue from native sources, leaving out of account the loss of life among the native population.

We have already good grounds for hoping, moreover, that in due time, a limited number of intelligent young natives may be trained to an understanding of and liking for sanitary reform, and may become competent inspectors in these matters themselves, or at least good practical assistants.

644. The following official opinion is quoted by one of the correspondents:—
“I am quite convinced that nothing save periodical visits from the Governor will effect any improvements in the sanitary and domestic condition of the people.” While we agree that great benefit ensues from such visits of inspection we think that supervision is required at much more frequent and regular intervals than are possible or even advisable in the case of the Governor, whose time is already more than occupied; and who, as a matter of policy, should not in person be too much *en evidence* before the natives.

Political.

Political.

ELECTIVE
LEGIS-
LATURE.

XXXVI.—ELECTIVE LEGISLATURE.

645. The writer of Reply No. 39 declares that “a more satisfactory state of affairs can only be secured by the establishment of an improved form of legislature,” and wishes to have elective powers conferred upon the white population and the natives. He reserves, however, ten nominees to the Governor, while he allots only three to the European colonists and two to the natives themselves.

646. We find no justification for the idea that the introduction of a democratic element of this kind into the Colonial Legislature would help to conserve the native race more effectively than the present system of law-making.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

647. We think it desirable that, for convenience of reference, our conclusions on the questions into which we have been instructed to inquire should now be briefly summarised.

POPULATION.

648. We find that it may be safely concluded that since the beginning of the present century the population of Fiji has been decreasing. And the decrease at present going on as ascertained by decennial census does not exceed an average of 779 per cent. per annum; but may, according to figures ascertained by registration of births and deaths, be no more than 401. At the present time the males exceed the females in number, being in the proportion of 8:7.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
The population returned at the Census of 1891 was	56,445	49,355	105,800
At the date of the Census of 1891, the native population, as computed by registration with the Census of 1881 as a basis, was	58,244	51,902	110,146
			<i>First</i>

First Group of Causes—tending to the Degeneracy of the People as a Race.

649. The opinions of those correspondents who cite polygamy as a possible factor in causing the decrease are divided; but those who regret its abolition do not propose to re-establish it.

650. We do not ourselves regard the abolition of the practice of polygamy in Fiji as seriously affecting the question of the Decrease of the Population. At all events, no recommendation we might make under this head could be of any practical value.

651. While there is a direct conflict of opinion between the correspondents regarding the extent to which consanguineous marriage obtains at the present day among the Fijians, all the writers who have alluded to it agree in condemning it as a destructive agency.

652. Our native witnesses advanced various interesting views on the subject (*vide* paragraph 31); but the sum of them does not point definitely to any important conclusion, save that marriages between *veidavolani* are usually regarded as insipid, and that connubial discord more often accompanies such unions than those between strangers. It also appears that the *veidavolani* relationship is a frequent cause of adultery on the part of *veidavolani* who are not married within its pale.

653. We have given much attention to this part of our subject, and have collected statistics regarding the frequency of, and the offspring resulting from, both classes of marriage—that is, consanguineous and extraneous. Of consanguineous marriages we find that those between *veidavolani*, or orthogamous cousins as we have termed these relations, deserve special consideration on account of their greater fecundity and the superior vitality of their progeny. Our statistics (*vide* paragraphs 46—65 and Appendix II) show that such marriages prevail to a remarkable extent, forming over *one-fourth* of all the marriages which take place; but there is an impression that the custom is less popular than of old, and is being gradually relinquished. Of those between other relations the proportion is about one-eighth of the whole. Between fellow-townpeople not directly related it is nearly one-third, and between strangers only one-third.

654. Our own opinion based on the statistics we collected of 448 families in twelve different towns is that the practice of marriage between orthogamous cousins has not had, and has not now, any effect towards diminishing the number of the population: On the other hand, marriage between relations other than *veidavolani* seems to be attended with disastrous results. Our recommendations are that the custom of *veidavolani* marriages should be allowed to take its own course: but that unions between strangers should be encouraged by means of the concentration of towns and by the creation of Model Settlements which we advocate elsewhere.

655. Sixteen of the sixty-six Replies to the Circular cite epidemic diseases among the supposed causes of the decrease. Foremost among them are the great epidemic of measles which took place in 1875, dysentery, and whooping-cough. To these one of the correspondents adds the *lila balavu* or “wasting sickness” which we believe to have occurred about 1792, and which tradition describes as having been responsible directly, and indirectly, for a dreadful mortality. With it, however, there seems to be confused in the native legends the occurrence of a second great epidemic, dysenteric in nature; and circumstances point to the year 1803, as the probable date of this scourge.* It also undoubtedly caused an enormous number of deaths; and must have weakened the constitutions of many of the survivors.

656. Native opinion advances the introduction of zymotic diseases of foreign origin as one of the prime causes for the decadence of the race.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

I.—POLYGAMY.

II.—CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE.

III.—EPIDEMIC DISEASES.

657.

* A devastating epidemic described as of a dysenteric or choleraic character is known to have raged in the Hawaiian Islands in the same year. We know that sandal-wood ships traded in both groups at that period; and there may have been a direct connection between this and the disease which raged in Fiji. The former is recorded in Jarves's History of Hawaii: London, 1843: pp. 16, 174, 370.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

III.—
EPIDEMIC
DISEASES.

657. We concur in the views which have been expressed by others on this subject. The effect of foreign zymotic poisons acting on a race not physically habituated to them, who live under insanitary general conditions the harmfulness of which they are incapable of appreciating or of resisting, cannot but be disastrous. These effects we believe to have been at work during the whole of the present century.

We may name dysentery and whooping-cough as the two most destructive diseases of an epidemic kind with which the natives are brought face to face at the present juncture, the latter being a disease particularly difficult to cope with amongst untutored peoples. The applicable remedies are stated at paragraph 104.

IV.—
CONDITION
OF WOMEN.

658. More than one-third of the correspondents assert that the condition of the women of Fiji is unsatisfactory, and unfavourable for developing the race. Some of the faults are ascribed to the existing social system and to its attendant domestic customs; others to the neglect of such customs and the decay of those which obtained in heathen times. Some are said to result from physical servitude of the women and the idleness of the men; while others, such as innate frivolity and an absence of the feeling of responsibility, are laid at the door of the women themselves. We have quoted native testimony in support of the latter point (*vide* paragraph 114).

659. We find that the writers have not, as a rule, kept in view the fact that while the condition of women varies widely within the Group, their moral qualities are least defective in the very districts in which women are lowest in the social scale; but we regard this distinction as being due more to differences of race than of occupation.

660. Our inquiries do not show that, except in so far as their physical fitness has been impaired by the effect of foreign epidemics, women in these districts are in a worse position now than they were in heathen times; for while they perform no more labour than they did then, the social estimation in which they are held has improved.

661. We do not believe that restrictive legislation to limit the labour of women would be of any service, for, even if it could be enforced, it would have the effect of diminishing the food supply and of affording the women a leisure which, in their present state, they would not turn to advantage. The Regulation forbidding women to carry heavy burdens is practically ignored.

662. We believe, however, that, excepting as regards exposure to physical violence, the position of women has been unfavourably affected by the emancipation from control which arose out of the introduction of civilisation. This change brought about also the relinquishment of those cares which were afforded by the customs incidental to polygamy, especially during gestation and lactation. The physical fitness of women for child-bearing has been further prejudicially affected by the occurrence of epidemic diseases of foreign origin—particularly by measles.

663. To meet these altered conditions women should, in those provinces where they hold that status, be elevated from the position of plantation labourers—not suddenly, but as opportunity allows. The policy of the Government should aim steadily at making the men take their full share of the necessary food-planting, and at instructing the women in more properly feminine occupations.

Mothers should be better cared for during pregnancy, confinement, and suckling.

These measures can only be effected gradually, and may best be introduced by means of such an agency as the Ladies' Sanitary Mission which we have suggested.

V.—
COMMUNAL
SYSTEM.

664. The critiques submitted by the writers on this question are so diverse that it is impossible to summarise them without resorting to tedious repetition. They are discussed in paragraphs 118 *et seq.*

665. Our conclusions have been given in paragraph 174; and we find that the proper exercise of authority by the chiefs is a necessary factor in the government of the people, and we recommend that the natural evolution of the race should be gently assisted forward without being either forced or cramped.

We

We suggest that the rights to personal *lala* possessed by chiefs should be registered; and that a system to permit of their abolition by mutual consent on a basis of compensation be submitted to a single province as an experiment.

We find that the continuance of the proper exercise of *lala* for communal purposes is indispensable, and has, as at present conducted, no bearing on the decrease of the population.

We condemn *kerekere*.

And we think *solevu* should receive no encouragement from the Government.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

V.—COMMUNAL SYSTEM.

666. It is generally agreed between the eight correspondents who allude to sexual depravity among the Fijians of to-day, and the native witnesses whom we examined, that this kind of immorality has increased since the abandonment of heathenism. We believe we are right in indorsing this opinion. Sexual license, formerly kept down with a strong hand, is now merely forbidden.

VI.—SEXUAL DEPRAVITY.

We do not find that it prevails to so great an extent as is the case in many races who are increasing in numbers, but we think that the effects of it are graver, inasmuch as it leads often to the separation of married couples, the practice of abortion, and to a diminution of the normal prospective fecundity of the unmarried girls and women.

667. We cannot rely much upon laws for making a people moral. The main hope of improvement must be founded on the better education and culture of the young. But we have suggested a specific alteration in the present enactment (Native Regulation No. 11 of 1877) against fornication, at paragraph 348.

668. And we recommend the gradual reintroduction of the *bure ni sa* if possible. We think further that the moral culture of girls and women through such an agency as the Ladies' Sanitary Mission will do much to repress the prevalent lustful tendencies of the race.

669. To say that Premature Civilisation (or rather the sudden irruption of western methods among a primitive oriental people) is a general term expressing all the changes by which the decrease is being brought about is, first, to assume that the race was not decreasing before its contact with white men, and, secondly, to beg the whole question. Still, the assertion is in the main true, and has been advanced by thirteen of the correspondents in reply to the Circular. They concur in naming education of the commoners as the one possible check; and we agree with them, giving, however, special prominence to the need for schooling in hygienic matters of all kinds.

VII.—PREMATURE CIVILISATION.

670. The means by which we think this might by degrees be afforded are:—

Concentration of Villages (§ 628 *et seq.*).

Model Settlements (§ 628 *et seq.*).

Ladies' Sanitary Mission (§ 572 *et seq.*).

European Provincial Sanitary Inspectors (§ 636 *et seq.*).

Special Teaching in the Government Technical School (§ 626, 629).

671. Fourteen correspondents suggest an inherent lack of virility in the race itself as the true cause of infant mortality and of the decrease in numbers.

VIII.—WANT OF VIRILITY.

The subject comprises—

Infecundity; and

Lack of power to resist or survive disease.

Statistics show, however, that the Fijians are a fecund people; their mean birth-rate for the last decade being 38·48 per mille per annum, which is higher than that of England, and half as much again as that of France. We cannot therefore support the writers who, without the evidence of figures before them, have expressed their opinion that but few children are born.

672. While, however, the birth-rate is high, it is shown that only eleven-twentieths (or rather more than one half) the children born survive their first year*:

a

* *Vide* Twelfth Annual Report on the Vital Statistics of the Native Population, year 1890-91.

a result which must be due either to inherited physical weakness, or to unsuitability of surroundings, or to accidental epidemic diseases, or to a combination of two or all three of these.

First in order among the chief causes of the loss of vitality we place the after-effects of the ravages of the three great epidemics alluded to above—an obscure, but, in our opinion, a real cause of diminished stamina.

In the second place we put the taint of constitutional diseases, by which Fijians are extensively affected, namely, scrofula, yaws, leprosy, filariasis, and tuberculosis, with their concomitant evils, which offer great obstacles to the physical wellbeing of the people, not only in the passing generation, but in its posterity.

Next in order we would place the inferiority of diet. The ordinary diet of the Fijians is ample enough in bulk, but is deficient in proteids, and consists mainly of starchy foods, which, though they support life, are not essential to it, and do not impart what may be termed fibre or staying-power. While this diet favours the speedy healing of clean wounds, it seems to withhold from its consumers that essential vitality which the flesh-eaters of temperate regions acquire.

673. The remedies we propose against this state of things can only operate gradually. They are those already enumerated under “Premature Civilisation” (paragraph 190), to which must be added Miscegenation, the Establishment of Provincial Hospitals, more exact and better conceived Inquiries by Native Magistrates into cases of Still-births, Infants’ Deaths, and Measures for the Repression of Yaws (paragraph 474), and the Sanitary Education recommended throughout this Report.

674. Mental apathy, laziness, improvidence, and lack of ambition are said to be now characteristic of the native race, and are believed to have had their origin in the personal security afforded by the *Pax Britannica*. Savage warfare made the people alert, active, wary, and provident. These qualities are not now called forth. The introduction of European tools, implements, and conveniences diminished the need of hard work and induced laziness. The custom of *kerekere* neutralises ambition. These conditions unfavourably affect the infant vitality, inasmuch as it does not now appear necessary to bear or rear children for the strengthening of the tribes or the protection of the parents in case of war. Children have ceased to be useful, and, therefore, suffer neglect.

675. Among such people, industry and thrift are not to be looked for. The climate does not stimulate to exertion, the ordinary food of the people imparts no staying-power, the conditions of production demand but a minimum of labour, and the communal nature of institutions paralyses individual effort.

676. Amid such an environment it would be impossible to expect precaution against disease, or exertion to combat sickness. These conditions are fatal in themselves to an increase in population; while the prevalent *vis inertiae* prevents the speedy introduction of progressive measures. It is moreover a state of affairs that can be altered only by natural and healthy evolution, which will not be effected in the present generation.

Second Group of Causes—those more immediately Affecting the Welfare and Stamina of the People individually.

677. Twenty-four writers have alluded to the quality and supply of food and drinking-water enjoyed by the Fijians, but only one of them expresses satisfaction on these heads. Our own observations, supported by the testimony of native witnesses, go to show that deficiency in amount is an event of the rarest occurrence, but that the every-day food of the Fijians lacks the important nutritive qualities possessed by foods rich in proteids, while there can be no doubt that it is quite inadequate for women during the periods of gestation and suckling, and for young children.

678. Among the principal drawbacks affecting the food-supply are also its bulkiness, and its perishability. The principle staples,—yams, dalo, breadfruit, plantains, and fish,—all participate in one or other or both of these defects.

The

The waste of food incidental to the lavish feasts to which natives are addicted, on trivial as well as on great occasions, is another regrettable fact.

That a law to regulate the planting of food by every able-bodied man should ever have been deemed necessary is in itself a circumstance suggestive of improvidence on the part of the natives.

679. Our views on the prevention of waste of food, and on improvement in its quality and garnering, are tabulated in Division XVII of the Remedies Proposed (paragraphs 581 *et seq.*). *Vide* also paragraphs 248 *et seq.*

680. As regards water, we are satisfied that in many districts, especially near the coast, the quality is utterly bad; and that in such places there can be no remedy, except the wholesale removal of villages from alluvial grounds—to which the people will never consent—or the laying of pipes from a distance, which in many cases would be expensive beyond the means at command.

681. The natives do not recognise a water as dangerous or even suspicious, though it be so obviously bad that no educated white man would drink a single tumblerful of it; nor, of course, have they any conception of the risks they run by the imbibition of filarial parasites or their ova. But over a large part of the country there is an abundant supply of good water.

682. Our recommendations for improving the water-supply of native towns have been stated at paragraphs 251—254, 255 (7), and 587; and consist, briefly, in laying down pipes where feasible, and in sinking properly constructed wells where the ground is favourable for them.

683. Some correspondents think the injudicious use of clothing among the natives brings about diseases of the respiratory organs. Having regard to the sparing use made of clothing by the natives we do not think that this is an important factor in the question of the decrease, or that any improvement could be devised in respect to it by which the mortality would become diminished.

684. One half of the correspondents deal with this aspect of native life as it affects the decrease of the population. There is no divergence from the general opinion that the domestic conditions under which the natives dwell are insanitary. The details of the defects are expressed in paragraphs 259 to 269, 274 (1—4); and relate, broadly speaking, to unhealthy sites for houses and villages, lack of subsoil drainage, low *yavu*, defective construction, repair, ventilation, and dryness of dwelling-houses; non-observance of sanitary regulations, and lack of intelligent supervision for enforcing them; the habit of sleeping on mats not raised off the ground except by a layer of hay or *sasa*—usually dank and mouldy; imperfect latrine accommodation; inattention to cleanliness of person, clothing, mats, mosquito-nets, water-crocks and bamboos, cooking-vessels and food-troughs or platters; irregularity in meals, both as to time and quantity; and also in bathing and out-door amusements after sundown.

685. Suggestions for the improvement of existing conditions are made in various directions, but may be conveniently classified under—

- (1) Those which may be acted upon by the Legislature;
- (2) Those which can be given effect to by the District or Village Councils; and
- (3) Those which require the personal concurrence of individuals before they can be brought about.

686. Unless the people be educated it is idle to hope that they will conform to any sanitary principles which involve personal sacrifice, either in the form of labour, property, or of foregoing their whims and impulses; and this is doubtless one reason why they so persistently neglect to raise high *yavu* to their dwellings. This education can only be supplied by means of some such agency as the Hygienic Mission by European Women which we have advocated in paragraphs 572—580 and elsewhere; and, indirectly, by the concentration of villages into large towns.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

X.—
QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF FOOD AND DRINKING-WATER.

XI.—
CLOTHING.

XII.—
INSANITARY DWELLINGS AND DOMESTIC HABITS.

687. Legislation, supported by adequate inspection and enforcement by Native Medical Practitioners and European Inspectors (paragraphs 273, 636—638) might then follow with advantage. The Remedies recommended under this head are summarised at paragraph 274.

688. The tendency of the natives is towards decentralisation. In the ten years between 1881 and 1891, while the population decreased, the number of towns increased by six per cent, *i.e.* from 1319 to 1398.

689. The concentration of towns is advocated on the score of—

Sanitation;
Administration;
Education; and
Miscegenation.

690. For new towns good sites could be selected, and good houses be built, as we have suggested at paragraphs 270—274.

691. Larger towns would be more easily susceptible of inspection than the present small and scattered ones, and superior men could be obtained as chiefs, officers, and teachers (*vide* paragraph 279).

692. The marriage of unrelated people would thus be facilitated, by bringing a greater number of them together socially (*vide* paragraph 277).

693. The difficulty as to the provision of planting-land has been dealt with at paragraphs 281—282, and we propose (*vide* paragraph 283) that inquiries should be made with a view to recording information as to the inter-relation of the various *mataqali*.

694. We think that constant and minute supervision is at present the main requirement of the race and will afford the only effective substitute for the old restraints—superstitious and physical fear—by which obedience to recognised principles used to be compelled; and we believe that the agglomeration of small villages into comparatively large towns is the only condition under which efficient and therefore salutary supervision is possible.

695. Two correspondents object to the Native Taxation Scheme on principle (*vide* paragraph 287), and a few others discuss objections in, or associated with, the details of its working (paragraph 288). The principal of these objections relates to the *tabu* being placed on cocoanuts so as to prevent or unduly restrict the use of the nut for food,—a subject which has, since the receipt of these Replies, been officially inquired into and dealt with; and another writer argues that the system is used by chiefs as a lever to help them in securing other levies. So far as illegitimate levies are concerned we do not think that this is the case. Assistance in legitimate levies we do not regard as objectionable.

696. The Native Tax is, practically, a Land Tax, and the revenue derived from it is necessary for the government of the natives themselves and in justice to the rest of the community (*vide* paragraphs 289—290).

697. A hut-tax and a poll-tax have been suggested as substitutes, but these we deem unsuitable;—the former for obvious reasons; and the latter also (*vide* paragraph 291). It is also deemed impossible to give the natives generally the option of paying their tax in money or in kind,—copra being the only commodity for which there is a large enough market that the individual tax-payer can provide without the co-operation of his fellows—and copra is not within the reach of those who dwell in Vitilevu or away from the littoral districts, for the reasons stated in paragraph 293.

698. The principal charges made against the present Native Taxation Scheme are:—

- (1) That the assessment is excessive;
- (2) That defects in the details cause waste of labour and produce;
- (3) That in interfering with the natives' liberty to sell their produce to whom they will, and to live how or where they please, a spirit of discontent is created that is bearing heavily upon the death-rate; and

- (4) That in copra-producing districts the prolonged *tabu* upon the nuts, and in sugar-growing districts the absence of the men for lengthened periods in the cane-fields, is the direct cause of infant mortality.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XIV.—
NATIVE
TAXATION
SCHEME.

699. We have shown (paragraph 294) that while the assessment as a whole is by no means excessive, it is probable that its incidence might be more nearly equalised with advantage—some provinces escaping with an obviously light burden under the existing arrangement. The second charge belongs to the past rather than the present: and such waste as does exist we believe to be due to the natives' fondness for debate and delay in making their own arrangements for sharing out the work, rather than to any actual loss of labour or produce.

700. As to the *tabu* on cocoanuts, we have already mentioned that since the receipt of the Replies to the Circular the disadvantages of this system have in great measure been annulled; and we make certain recommendations for giving wider effect to this improvement [paragraph 294 (4)]. We have also advised that no natives should be permitted to plant produce for taxes at a greater distance than 10 miles from their homes, that their absence from home on such service should never exceed four days at a time, and that men who are responsible for the care of sick persons or nursing-mothers should at such times be exempted from other work.

701. In the Replies to the Circular the direct allusions to causes thus classed are limited to those submitted by the Chief Medical Officer, a retired magistrate, and three Wesleyan Missionaries. The conditions cited are immaturity at birth, pulmonary atelectasis, malnutrition from deficiency of breast-milk or the supply of unsuitable substitutes for it, bodily dirt, yaws, worms, and that termed by the natives *ramusu*—which appears to denote any injury or ailment which they are not able to locate or define.

XV.—
DISEASES OF
CHILDREN.

702. To these must be added, now-a-days, whooping-cough and influenza (*vide* paragraph 542).

703. Yaws is undoubtedly, of them all, the most damaging to the health of those who survive; and is an evil of such magnitude in connection with the vitality of the Fijian race that we have deemed it worthy of consideration in a separate division of our Report (*vide* paragraphs 459 to 474). *Ramusu* is a vague and unscientific appellation which we have endeavoured to elucidate in paragraph 299. It is usually treated by *bobo* or native massage, which is occasionally of a violent nature and may be otherwise injurious to young children. Malnutrition, bodily dirt, and worms are abominations for the evils brought about by which we foresee a gradual amelioration as the future mothers among the rising generation become better schooled, especially if such influences as concentration of towns, a pure water supply, Ladies' Sanitary Mission, and the establishment of crèches, can be brought to bear.

704. Thirteen correspondents allude to one or both of these luxuries, and concur in deprecating, more or less, their employment. Four of these are missionaries of the Wesleyan body, which, as is well known in the Colony, constitutes itself a total abstinence league in respect to the plants in question.

XVI.—
ABUSE OF
"YAQONA"
AND
TOBACCO.

705. It is clear that the use of *yaqona* has become more general in recent decades than was the case when the usages of heathen polity restricted it to chiefs' houses and occasions of ceremony. Males now drink it at a more youthful age than formerly; and females commonly partake of it too, although this was an occurrence of great rarity in past times, and, prior to Qoliwasawasa's reign, was considered a shocking thing. One tendency of Christianity was, however, to raise the status of the women, and to extend their privileges, and in Bau and Rewa they soon began to imitate with impunity their royal and unconventional sister whose name has just been quoted (paragraph 307), and to convert liberty into license.

706. *Yaqona* is now consumed in the houses of the common people whenever they can obtain a root of it; but an excessive or constant supply is generally beyond the reach of any but the richer natives (paragraph 313).

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XVI.—
ABUSE OF
"YAQONA"
AND
TOBACCO.

707. We believe that—while, in moderation and if prepared in a cleanly manner, its use is as harmless as prepared in the old fashion it is revolting—habitual indulgence in *yaqona* is deleterious to the health and demoralising to the mind of the toper. We regard it as especially hurtful to suckling-mothers, who are often advised to take frequent draughts of it with the view of increasing their milk-supply. There is evidence that in some places the people occasionally give themselves over to bouts of *yaqona*-drinking. This is not merely a reprehensible practice in every respect, but is a direct violation of Native Regulation No. 4 of 1885.

708. As regards tobacco-smoking, we find that it is a universal habit; and that children of both sexes often begin to adopt it at a very early age. We think however that it is apt to regulate itself by the degree of susceptibility in each person's case to the toxic effects of the drug; and we do not doubt that both as regards this habit and *yaqona*-toping the action of the Wesleyan Mission has of late years done much to restrain the natives from excess, especially in the case of women.

709. We recommend that the Native Regulation concerning *Yaqona* (No. 4 of 1885) be more generally enforced: and that a new Regulation to forbid the use of tobacco to boys and girls and to suckling-women be enacted. We may also point out that all such Regulations need persons other than natives to apply them in the homes of the offenders; and that they could best be rendered effective by the appointment of the European officers proposed under the heading "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws" (*vide* paragraphs 639 to 644).

XVII.—
LACK OF
DISCIPLINE.

710. This is a subject to which, especially as it affects children, we attach very great importance indeed, although the correspondents who advert to it in any direct manner are but five in number. Our remarks are comprised in paragraphs 320—328, in the latter of which may be found our recommendations to the effect that greater attention be given to discipline in the schools, and that more subjects be taught under the improved conditions to which concentration of towns should give rise. But we recognise also the fact that it will hardly be until future generations become parents that much advantage in this respect can be gained in the home lives of native children.

XVIII.—
TREATMENT
OF SICK
PERSONS.

This subject has been dealt with under "Cause" XXXIV, which is a kindred one, and will be reviewed hereafter.

XIX.—
IRREGU-
LARITY OF
LIVING.

711. This, which is to a great extent an outgrowth of the existing lack of discipline already described, seems to be one of the loose and fitful conditions unavoidably incidental to the life of primitive man throughout the world.

712. It influences his bodily health, however, and his mental training when that begins. In order to bring about a lasting and not irksome reform in irregular habits it is first necessary to change the material conditions regarding labour, diet, and the social relations with his fellows by which the native has hitherto been swayed. It will be admitted that this aim is an extremely wide one and is bound up intimately with the whole of the Fijian's social system (paragraphs 330—334).

713. We have only been able to recommend that sanitary knowledge should be diffused as much as possible by means of a suitable literature, and that theory should be supported by example through such a means as the Ladies' Sanitary Mission which we have proposed. Beyond this, no doubt, a searching supervision, as advocated under the head of "More Efficient Administration of Native Laws" (paragraphs 639 *et seq.*), would be the remedy most to be relied on, especially if assisted by the concentration of towns which we have elsewhere advised.

XX.—
OBSTACLES
TO
MARRIAGE.

714. Nineteen of the sixty-six correspondents touch on this subject.

715. It appears that inability to provide the marriage gifts deemed suitable by the relatives of the girl is one common reason for delaying the union of engaged couples; but that objections raised by a more or less distant relative or relatives afford

afford a no less frequent cause for averting marriage. Many of the reasons alleged for such objections appear to white men whimsical and irrelevant, or to savour merely of greed or spite. Delays on the part of the community, actuated by the *Buli*, in providing the bridal house are also stated to sometimes be the means of postponing or preventing marriage.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XX.—
OBSTACLES TO MARRIAGE.

716. It was shown that unions sanctioned by the ceremony of the church have frequently not been consummated owing to the *yau ni kumu* not being to hand; and that adultery on the part of one or other of the parties has been the result.

717. A list of remedies proposed in the Replies to the Circular is printed in paragraph 339.

718. It is our own opinion that the custom requiring marriage gifts should be gradually broken down, and that the provisions of Regulation 2 of 1892, by which *duguci ni yalewa* are forbidden and the demerits of *yau ni kumu* restrained, ought to be steadily kept before the people: although we are aware that Regulation No. 3 of 1883 includes a requirement—"That the customs and ceremonies are duly performed." And we think the obligations resting upon native chiefs to encourage early marriages should be kept before them.

719. It is generally admitted in the Replies to the Circular that there are defects in the Native Regulations dealing with this subject, or else in their administration. Eleven writers condemn the punishment of fornication by legal penalties, but only two go so far as to recommend the abolition of the penalty for adultery.

XXI.—
PENAL LAWS AGAINST FORNICATION.

720. It is suggested by one or two that the present laws be more stringently applied.

721. We have shown that, in the native mind, there is less concern for the moral reputation of a girl in the abstract, than for the fact that when she becomes pregnant she is damaged as a marriageable article; and the parents consequently cannot command the same value in marriage gifts as when her unchastity was not visibly proven.

722. There has been a steady decline in the number of prosecutions for fornication of late years, although our Fijian witnesses agreed that about half the brides have sacrificed their virginity before marriage.

723. It is a not uncommon practice for persons prompted by revenge to conspire to bring about a man's downfall by raking up to light some old delinquency of his with a girl; and cases are known where loose women have been set on to inveigle unpopular men for the purpose of procuring their prosecution after the event.

724. Yet in 1892, out of 1,979 cases of all kinds tried in the District Courts of eight provinces, only 84 were indictments for fornication, from which 63 convictions resulted.

725. But the main charge against this law is that while it is useless as a deterrent from immorality, it forms a powerful inducement towards the procurement of abortion. We have shown in Divisions XXII of the "Causes" and XXVIII of the "Remedies" that, as a matter of fact, abortion is of common occurrence.

726. The conclusion arrived at, however, by the *Bulis* and Native Magistrates—not the *Rokos*—at the *Bose Vakaturaga* in 1892, was that the social disgrace of disclosure of illegitimate pregnancy rather than the fear of punishment by the law occasions the practice of abortion, and that the repeal of the penalty would drive the parents and friends of a seduced girl to avenge the injury by taking the matter into their own hands.

727. We are inclined to agree with the latter view; yet to minimise all shadow of incentive to the practice of abortion, we have recommended some modification in the matter as it at present stands.—(*Vide* paragraph 348).

And we have also expressed the view that the re-institution of the *bure ni sa* for youths and single men would be advantageous (paragraph 618).

728. The existence among the Fijians of regular abortion-mongers and of the practice of procuring abortion admits of no doubt. Some of the writers of the Replies, while stating their belief that abortion is extensively practised, do not acknowledge that it has any serious influence upon the decrease of the population. But a large majority declare that it not only is a very common occurrence but has also a very marked effect in increasing infant mortality.

729. The remedies suggested by them are stated at paragraph 352. No. (5), as previously explained, is already in operation.

730. We have collected a good deal of evidence from native witnesses—some of them midwives—on the subjects of this Division. The substance of it is embodied in our Minute—paragraphs 353–7—from which it is clear that abortion is no less mischievous a process amongst the natives of this Colony than elsewhere. Moreover, whereas in former times the practice of it was limited to the class of hereditary or professional midwives, to whom women desirous of submitting to the operation would resort, it is now frequently attempted by the grandmother or other older relative of the pregnant woman, or even by one of her companions.

731. The motives are discussed in paragraph 354, and the methods at 355–6.

732. The popular belief in *wai ni yava* (sterility nostrums) is thought to exercise a deleterious influence; and the same effect is attributed to the practice of *vakasilima* in some of its aspects.

733. The Court returns afford no guide to the extent to which criminal abortion actually prevails.

734. We enumerated only 55 women who confessed to having miscarried once or oftener among 448 mothers of existing families, whom we interrogated in 12 villages—that is to say one in eight; but we believe this figure understates the fact very greatly.

735. We think that in provinces which show a markedly low birth-rate, such as Macuata, Bua, Cakaudrove, and Tailevu, especially where the returns also record a high rate of still-births (as in two first named) abortion criminally induced must be held to account for the deviation from the higher rate obtaining in other parts of the Colony.

736. We have no fault to find with the laws which bear upon the repression of criminal abortion and feticide.

But the difficulties in the way of detecting the commission of this offence are extreme; and the only practical recommendation we have felt able to make is that certain forms of native medical manipulation—*vakasilima* to wit—be prohibited by Regulation, and that the informer receive a portion of the money penalty inflicted in such cases.—[*Vide* also paragraphs 491 and 496 (3)].

737. The operation of the measures we advise under Remedies XXXIV and XXXV (paragraphs 636 to 644) would also have a direct bearing on the detection and repression of this form of crime, as would all real progress in the education of the race,—*vide* paragraph 613, in which we have stated our belief that it is rather in general reforms calculated to restrain the motives than in punitive means for condemning the offence that we should rely.

Third Group of Causes—those Affecting the Unborn Child.

738. These questions, essentially technical in their nature, have naturally, perhaps, received but little notice from the writers of the Replies to the Circular.

739. Statistics, as explained in the Circular itself and abundantly verified, show that the Fijian race is not lacking in average fecundity. Many children are born—but few survive; only 37·6 per cent. attaining the age of 12 months.

740. Certain physical weaknesses in the parents, some general and others affecting only the reproductive organs and function, must be held to partly account for this low vitality in the offspring. One may expect that among those who do attain adult age some constitutional defects or taints may persist, which, having been inherited, and perhaps emphasised by malnutrition and insanitary surroundings, are

are in their turn transmissible to the offspring, generation after generation. To this class scrofula and tuberculosis assuredly belong.

741. We refrain from expressing any opinion as to leprosy, except to point out that it is commonly a direct cause of sterility, and that it often enough attacks children and young people before they have attained a marriageable age, affording thereby a further and indirect check.

742. Yaws, too, is credited by medical experts with producing results as dire as those of syphilis, and it appears that morbid states of the decidua and of the placenta are frequently attributable to this constitutional cause, and that abortion and premature birth may and often do result from it. Hence, also, many puny or still-born children when parturition has not taken place before the normal term.

743. The Fijians are especially prone to diseases of the bowels, and it is well known that dysentery or severe diarrhoea may be the means of bringing about a miscarriage or premature birth.

744. Over-frequent gestation, often terminating prematurely, commonly tends to increase the evil by bringing about a habit of aborting.

This is cited in connection with *dabe*.—(Paragraphs 425—431).

745. Epidemics, and, lastly, hard work during pregnancy, and fishing, (paragraphs 371—6) contribute, we believe, their quota.

746. Our conclusions on this head are summarised at paragraphs 369 and 370. The remedies for such a state of things are naturally of a general kind. They embrace all the proposals we have made in the body of this Report under the groupings—*Tutelar, Domestic, Clinical, Moral, and Administrative and Sanitary*.

747. Hard work, as customarily performed by the women of Fiji, is blamed by fifteen writers for many of the ills which afflict both mothers and offspring. There is no doubt that in many provinces the women do much heavy work in carrying burdens, which is repugnant to the views of white men both from social and physical considerations. The natives believe that it is a good thing for pregnant women to work hard towards the end of their pregnancy, and that the birth is thereby facilitated; and it is difficult to shake their faith in this popular saw.—(Paragraphs 371 and 382).

748. Our native witnesses asserted that, whereas, of yore, it was customary for pregnant women to take much care of themselves and to abstain from work during the first five months of pregnancy, it is now common for them, except where Tongan influence prevails, to do all sorts of work during the whole period.

749. We suggest the better enforcement of the Native Regulation which forbids women to carry heavy burdens, to meet this state of things. But some such educational agency as a Ladies' Sanitary Mission would in course of time do more to avert the evil than any other means we have thought of.

750. Fishing as undertaken by women—*qoli*—which is in reality a relaxation rather than a labour, has been much decried on account of the exposure and long immersion supposed to be inseparable from it. We have gone carefully into its consideration and have heard intelligent native evidence on the subject.

751. As regards sea-fishing we are not disposed to suggest any interference with the customary practices, beyond letting it be more generally known that it should not be indulged in by women near their monthly periods, nor during pregnancy or lactation.

752. We condemn unhesitatingly, however, the fashion of groping for *kai* (mussel), whereby women often spend several hours in river water from three to five feet in depth, though we do not see our way to advise any statutory interference with the liberties of the people in this respect. It is a matter for sanitary advice and education. *Vide* "Remedies" XII, XIII, XIV, and XXIX.

753. In this we are confronted again by a subject of so purely technical a nature that but four writers (one of them a medical one) have made any allusion to it. Nevertheless we consider it one of the gravest importance.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XXIII.—PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AFFECTING FECUNDITY, AND THE DISEASES OF GESTATION.

XXIV.—WORK DURING PREGNANCY.

XXV.—FISHING BY CHILD-BEARING WOMEN.

XXVI.—UNSKILLED MIDWIFERY

754. For the details we have collected relating to it we must refer to our Minute comprising paragraphs 378—386.

755. We conclude that, on the whole, the native midwifery methods are decidedly imperfect; and we think that it would not be difficult to introduce a more scientific procedure in respect to:—(1) Posture; (2) The treatment of the umbilical cord; (3) Dealing with the after-birth and membranes; (4) The care of the child during the first hours after its birth. It is obvious, however, that to try and teach the mass of Fijian mothers and midwives how best to deal with such accidents as malpresentation, *placenta prævia*, and similar grave abnormalities within the realm of what may be termed the mechanics of midwifery, would be both futile and dangerous.

756. The giving of tactful and kindly aid of the proper kind in child-bed affords perhaps the very best channel by which a Ladies' Sanitary Mission could gain an ascendancy over the hearts of native women. The women once converted would themselves induct the men to an improved sanitary and domestic system, even though they might not deliberately set about doing it.

Fourth Group of Causes—those Affecting the Infant.

757. It is generally conceded that harm often comes to infants and young children by reason of the absence of their parents from home.

758. If a mother takes her child with her to her fishing, or to her food-plantations, it is exposed to chill, wet, the sun's rays, and the effects of irregular or improper feeding.

759. On the other hand, there are many cases in which, if she leaves it at home, it incurs even greater risks from irregular feeding, and is more liable, besides, to *ramusu* (*vide* paragraphs 299, 389, and 487), and physical injuries resulting from falls and so forth, through the absence of competent or efficient supervision.

760. The remedy which first suggests itself for this dilemma is, of course, the abandonment of outdoor work by women. But this can only result from very gradual reform; and we have therefore thought that some system of family co-operation for the care and dieting of young children is called for, as enabling mothers to go about their planting and fishing operations, if they will, with the comforting knowledge so dear to Fijians, that their responsibility would for the time be lessened.

761. With this as one of its objects in view, we have recommended that an attempt be made, in one province at first,—or even in a single district or village,—to institute crèches.

762. Our views and suggestions for the details of this innovation are set forth in paragraphs 396 to 402, and are too lengthy for recapitulation. We have advised that they be printed in the vernacular and circulated, before any draft on the subject is brought before the Native Regulation Board, in order that the chiefs may be in a position to give them sufficient thought.

763. Other means for checking neglect of infants are the system of magisterial inquiries into cases of still-birth and deaths of children under one year of age, already initiated; better enforcement (which can only be through European supervision) of the Regulation regarding neglect of children; the Ladies' Sanitary Mission; a prohibition against the performance of field-labour by women having children under three months of age—the husband being relieved from communal obligations for the time being but made definitely responsible for the provision of food, water, firewood, and attendance for his family.—[Paragraphs 395 and 403 (6)].

764. It is generally advanced by the correspondents in answer to the Circular that a deficiency in the quantity or quality of Fijian mothers' breast-milk, or of both quantity and quality, is a very frequent cause of malnutrition in the infants. The official mortality returns support their view that it is responsible for the actual death of a large number.

765. When this circumstance occurs it is next to impossible to find a proper substitute for the mother's milk. Our native witnesses admitted this to be so; and we are convinced, after consulting statistical evidence as well, that in at least three cases out of every four the death of a mother during the normal suckling period means the death of the child also; and we incline to think that where the mother survives but has a deficient milk-supply, the mortality of the children is only a shade less than in the case of the orphans.

766. This subject has been often quoted as one of the most prominent reasons for the decrease in population. We have therefore devoted much consideration to it (paragraphs 404—423). Our conclusions under this head are stated at paragraph 422, and the remedies we propose are set forth in paragraphs 423 and 446; and in the suggestions offered under the *Tutelar, Domestic, Clinical*, and *Administrative and Sanitary* groupings.

767. Thirteen correspondents allude to the ancient custom of separating husband from wife while the latter is suckling; but, in attributing its decay to the abolition of Polygamy, sufficient weight is not given by them to the fact that the females being then, as now, in the minority, the bulk of the common men had to be satisfied with one wife (paragraphs 18, 23, 363, 404).

768. *Dabe* expresses the condition of impaired nutrition or of disease to which an infant is brought in consequence of the deterioration which the natives believe takes place in the mother's milk when, and because, its parents have resumed cohabitation before the normal end of the suckling period. This period used to be prolonged from about twelve to thirty-six months. The Fijians have no proper artificial food for their infants, who must therefore be suckled until old enough to assimilate a coarse vegetable diet. To meet this state of things the custom of sexual abstinence naturally grew. It was a rational outcome of it and one admirably adapted for the purpose.

769. The relaxation of this custom is said to have resulted from the endeavours of the early missionaries to introduce the English form of family life among the natives, and one of the existing ministers of the Wesleyan Mission in his reply (No. 64) to the Circular characterises such separation, even now, as an "absurd and superstitious practice."

We strongly dissent from his view, but we fear that a general revival of the custom is now beyond the range of practicability: and the only remedies we can apply against the effects of its abandonment are the introduction of milk from the lower animals as a diet for infants, and some general measures for the improvement of the condition of women.

770. The reintroduction of the *bure ni sa* might indeed prove a help in this direction as well as in those already indicated for it.

771. It is clear to us that the function of dentition presents no special dangers to Fijian infants, unless it be that an unfavourable turn is sometimes given by it to the course of Yaws in those cases where children have been unlucky enough to contract that disease at an earlier age than usual. No separate proposal appears to us to be called for under this heading.

772. There is no doubt that, apart from irregularities and defects in their mothers' milk, native infants are brought face to face with many and great dangers in connection with their dietary, and that they frequently succumb to them.

773. Fourteen of the sixty-five correspondents adduce this fact as a cause of the excessive mortality.

774. One writer, whose communications are full of acumen, finds that the mother's physical inability to nourish her child, brought about by over-frequent gestation resulting out of monogamy (*vide* "Dabe"), is an evil which it is now too late to try and cure, and must therefore be endured. He advocates the use of "the

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XXVIII.—LACTATION.

XXIX.—"DABE."

XXX.—INADEQUATE CARE DURING DENTITION.

XXXI.—INFANTS' FOOD.

“the bottle” as the best means for enabling the evil to be endured; but does not state whether the provision should be of an animal or vegetable nature.

775. There are many difficulties in the way of providing a milk-supply (*vide* paragraphs 243, 438, 444–6, 630), and the employment of “the bottle” by ignorant and uncleanly persons is by no means free from risk; yet for prematurely weaned infants this is unquestionably the one hope to which we can cling.

776. The natives fully recognise the dangers which surround the weaning process when, through deficient supplies, it has to be undertaken before the normal time. They stigmatise a “prematurely weaned” child by the corresponding phrase in the vernacular—*kali dolo*; and they are prepared to see it die if attacked by any kind of sickness, whereas they would attach but little importance to a similar ailment in the case of a child who had been suckled to the full term. The chief substitutes for mother’s milk used are *ba* (paragraph 441) and chewed yam.

The former is deficient in nutritive properties and there are objections to the latter, to which several of the correspondents have drawn attention. We have discussed the *pro* and *con* of this diet at paragraphs 441 and 442.

777. We conclude that the absence of a suitable substitute for mother’s milk is a real and very serious want. Cow’s or goat’s milk is the only proper nutriment we would advocate for those whom it may be necessary to wean prematurely; but for those being weaned after the full term of suckling, and whose teeth are well developed, we think the easiest form of safe and nutritious diet for the natives to provide would be wheaten pap, made with cocoanut *lolo* or with milk, and sweetened with sugar or the fresh juice of sugar-cane.

778. We have elsewhere recommended that no *tabu* on cocoanuts should extend to such as may be required for *lolo*, or otherwise for nursing-mothers and young children.

779. The concentration of villages would probably assist in the provision of milch cattle for this object; and the establishment of a few model villages would offer means for training natives to pastoral occupations, which at present are utterly foreign to their instincts.

780. The principal diseases which affect the natives are diarrhoea and dysentery. The former more especially prevails amongst children, and the latter is common both in children and in adults. It is probable that both are generally, though not invariably, engendered by avoidable conditions which may be collectively classed under the term Bad Hygiene.

781. Statistics show that, in two provinces at least, more than 40 per cent. of all the deaths are registered as due to diseases located within the abdominal cavity. Their causes are stated by one of the medical writers to be, pre-eminently, bad water, bad air, bad food, or a specific contagium.

782. Many children and grown-up invalids develop *macake*,—a form of thrush—and die through want of cleanliness and of intelligent treatment and nursing.

783. Epidemic dysentery is of common occurrence; but enteric fever is of great rarity.

784. Tubercular disease of the intestine and mesenteric glands is frequently met with.

785. The Fijians believe strongly in their own herbal treatment for dysentery, and refuse to submit to the dietetic restrictions deemed essential by our medical men in such cases. It is one of the diseases from which they claim to have been exempt before white men came to their islands.

786. We think that the adoption of our recommendations as to food and water, improved dwellings and domestic conditions, concentration of towns, the institution of village crèches and of a Ladies’ Sanitary Mission, the appointment of European provincial sanitary officers with executive powers, the popularising of milk as a diet for children and invalids, and the establishment of provincial hospitals, would do much to reduce the enormous waste of life which at present occurs through the prevalence of bowel diseases which ought to be preventable.

787. But unless the willing and unbiassed consent and co-operation of the natives themselves, the chiefs officially and the people individually, can be secured for these objects, success, even in a moderate degree, will be hard to obtain. And at present the vast majority of them evince no such tendency; but are steadfast, on the other hand, in passively opposing all European sanitary improvements which involve labour or personal abnegation of any kind, or trench on the usages of established custom.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XXXII.—
BOWEL DISEASES.

788. Fourteen correspondents, of whom three are medical men, allude to *coko*.

XXXIII.—
YAWS
("Coko").

We believe that much of our information on this subject will be new to the Fijians themselves, as well as to others. The disease has been much neglected and much misunderstood, not only in this Colony but in other parts of the world where it is endemic.

We have written a Digest of those portions of the Replies to the Circular, in which this subject is touched upon, at paragraphs 459 and 460; followed by a Minute which ends with paragraph 474, and reviews *inter alia* the native evidence we obtained.

This latter is summarised in paragraph 470.

789. The attitude of the natives with regard to yaws is the factor which offers the greatest obstacle to the extinction of the disease.

790. They firmly and universally believe that persons who pass through their youth without contracting this disease will grow up dull and stupid in mind, and clumsy, stunted, or sickly in frame. They therefore openly prefer that their children should contract it; and the age of from two to six years is regarded as the proper time for having it.

791. As almost every Fijian child without exception acquires the disease a large number of those who are born weakly or who are rendered delicate by neglect or malnutrition after birth, are killed off by yaws soon after they become infected; the survivors being for the most part those whose natural constitution has proved strong enough to pass through the ordeal, and who succeed, more or less, in throwing off its deleterious consequences afterwards.

This probably accounts for the illogical conclusion to which the simple-minded natives have drifted.

792. Yaws is often enough registered by parents and scribes as the cause of children's death; but it is then invariably quoted in the Disease column as *Coko ca*, or *Maca vakaca na nona Coko*, or, in Western Vitilevu, *Drimu*, corresponding terms which imply abnormality in the course of the disease and refer either to the severity of the symptoms as a whole, but especially to emaciation, or to sudden or premature recession of the skin eruption which is the salient feature of yaws in the secondary stage.

When such cases occur the natives attribute them either to *dabe* (paragraphs 425 *et seq.*, 778) or *ramusu* (paragraphs 299, 389, 487), or to witchcraft, or to the ill-advised employment of medicines. They admit, however, that if acquired by very young children, yaws is a dangerous and often fatal disease.

793. Their treatment of it is confined to herbal infusions intended to "drive out" the eruption. They never make any attempt to cure or curtail it excepting when some of the granulomata persist many months after all the other symptoms have abated normally.

794. Save that they believe Yaws to be a purely Fijian or at least Polynesian ailment about which white men know nothing, they regard it, in fact, much as English mothers regard teething—a necessary, normal, and desirable process, harmful only when it accidentally goes wrong; in which case they merely strive to guide it back into the proper channel, never to cut it short or render it abortive.

795. Medical testimony revolts unreservedly at this view and advances the deplorable and disgusting tertiary sequelæ of yaws, whose connection with the original and secondary stages during childhood the natives do not suspect, as a potent reason for endeavouring to eradicate it.

796. Our conclusions, enumerated at paragraph 473 (1) to (8), point to the desirability that an endeavour be made to stamp out this disease from the Colony:—

- (1) By trying to overcome the native prejudices and to procure the willing co-operation of the people.
- (2) By dispensing iodide of potassium through the Native Medical Practitioners, as ringworm ointment is now dispensed.
- (3) By providing punishment for persons who expose healthy children to contact with infected subjects, and for parents who neglect to keep the *coko* sores of their children properly covered.
- (4) By obtaining the advice of the Council of Chiefs and Provincial Councils as to the local steps that should be taken for its eradication.

797. We have reviewed thus at length the subject of this Division because we are convinced that the prevalence of yaws offers an obstacle of the first importance in the way of the population being maintained in health and in number; and that, moreover,—given the sympathy and co-operation of the people themselves in such a measure,—its eradication would be a matter of no great difficulty or expense.

798. If there is one characteristic possessed by the Fijian race more than another calculated to arouse the indignation and pity of civilised people, it is their appalling heartlessness and indifference to the sufferings of others. So inborn and so complete does this apathy appear, that one can but accept it as an evidence of a definite lacuna in sensibility or power of perception, rather than as an indication of merely deficient ardour of mind.

The emotions of natives differ from ours in many striking particulars, apart from degree,—if we may judge from the modes by which they give expression to them. And it seems reasonable to expect that their mind-centres may possess morphological or structural qualities not wholly in accord with ours either—any more than the colour of their skin, the nature of the hair, the proportions of their crania, or the thickness and density of their other bones coincide with those of refined inhabitants of temperate climates.

It would indeed appear as if the Fijians are incapable of receiving the mental impression which we feel when our intellect, assisted by the physical senses of sight and hearing, and responding to the influence of the ethical standard to which we have been trained, excites from our emotional centres that sensation of sympathy which impels us to alleviate suffering.

In the Fijian, mental impressions derived through the physical senses are habitually responded to by acts of volition, it is true; but such acts appear to be prompted by reflex physical causes or by habit, rather than by any active intellectual reasoning process.

799. But if the causes for this callousness in the Fijian are partly intrinsic, they are also partly due to his surroundings. The latter have doubtless for long ages assisted to maintain and emphasise these tendencies; and it is idle to expect that an innovation of so complicated and volute a character as the application of European civilisation and Christianity acting merely for a few decades, can convert the coarse and cruel instinct of the race to a temperament owning sympathy as one of its features.

800. We cannot help thinking that a judicious miscegenation affords one of the means which, under existing conditions, would most effectually and most permanently improve the moral susceptibilities of the race.

801. We were not surprised to find that as many as thirty writers of Replies to the Circular unite in condemning the improper treatment and neglect by natives of sick persons.—(Paragraph 475 *et seq.*).

802. There are divergences of opinion, however, as to what are likely to prove the best measures for cultivating a sanitary instinct among the Fijians—(paragraph 481).

803. The recommendations of correspondents are set forth at paragraphs 481—484; and our Minute which follows them does not hold out much encouragement in respect of this subject. Our recommendations are long and somewhat intricate

intricate (paragraphs 495-6, and 592), and refer chiefly to the selection, training, and status of youths for sanitary officers, and to the establishment of provincial hospitals. Both these matters are already receiving official attention.

We have also advised that certain of the native processes comprised within the term *vakasilima* be forbidden, under a penalty; and that a pamphlet on the preservation of health and the care of infants and invalids be published in the vernacular.

RECAPITULATION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

XXXIV.—
NATIVE
NURSING
AND
TREATMENT
OF THE SICK.

804. It is conceded on all sides that the domestic and personal habits and surroundings of native life are insanitary. The prominent factor in this state of being is dirt and nastiness of sorts. If the Fijians are uncleanly in their habits during health, they are infinitely more foul in time of sickness.

XXXV.—
DOMESTIC
DIRT.

805. Children are of course apt to suffer from these conditions to a greater degree than adults.

806. Yet the people do not recognise the existence of this general filthiness and cannot be brought to understand the necessity for reform.

807. We have suggested (paragraph 500) that the town-crier should regularly enjoin the people to observe cleanliness, and that the health pamphlet already referred to should include an address on this subject.

808. Other general and educational means, to which we have drawn attention in the XIV, XXI, XXIX, and succeeding Proposed Remedies, would combine to effect a gradual but solid improvement in this respect,—if European inspection, for some long time at least, can be applied.

809. So satisfied are intelligent Europeans that apathy is a prominent and ingrained feature in the native character that as many as twenty-seven correspondents have cited it, and supported it with an overwhelming weight of evidence, whereas one alone defends this charge. The dictum of a native woman is quoted by one of them as showing that not ignorance but sheer downright sloth is at the bottom of it (paragraph 501). So that the enjoyment of his lands, and his fruit-trees, and his fishing-grounds, in his own life-time, is not jeopardised, the ordinary Fijian does not feel called upon to avert the threatened extinction of his race by any measure that demands from him the slightest exertion or self-denial. But some of this heedlessness may arise from a sense of helplessness, which naturally tends to a belief in fatalism.—(Paragraphs 505, 510).

XXXVI.—
NATIVE
APATHY AND
INSoucIANCE.

810. Whether the weakness of maternal instinct which undoubtedly prevails among the women of Fiji is an original flaw in the native character, or whether the feeling has been blunted by the customs and examples of their surroundings through ages, is an open question. The stringency of the old practice which provided for the proper nourishment of children by the separation of the parents after childbirth would seem to show that maternal instinct was not a characteristic that could be relied upon for the preservation of the race.—(Paragraph 507).

811. We cannot expect education alone to remedy this state of things, though of all measures it is the most likely to bring about a gradual improvement. We think that a certain amount of gentle coercion in the shape of a better enforcement of the Native Regulations is desirable. Two useful Regulations have recently been enacted—No. 5 of 1892, which provides for magisterial inquiries into the cases of still-births and deaths of infants, and No. 6 of 1892, enacting penalties for neglect of children.

812. It is not to be expected, however, that Native officers will prosecute for breaches of a mere *lex scripta* unless such breaches actually constitute in their eyes a culpable act from an ethical point of view; but we believe that if the duty were vested in European Sanitary Police, a beneficial result would speedily be felt.—(Paragraphs 512, 639-643).

813. It now remains for us to indicate the order in which we believe our proposed remedies might most effectually be applied.

814. We conceive that the main requirement of the people is constant supervision. Modern laws forbid, but do not restrain; they command, but do not insist; they can be more easily evaded than could the *argumentum baculinum* under which the people's habits were formerly moulded.

It is not to be denied that ample supervision by native chiefs and authorities is provided; but there are many requirements of the modern law which these officers do not understand or do not sympathise with, and if any of the proposed remedies are to be adopted it will be found that wholly native supervision will not be sufficient.

We think, therefore, that the first thing to be done is to provide more effective control by the appointment in each province, if it can be afforded, of a European officer as suggested under Remedy No. XXXV (More Efficient Administration of Native Laws), *vide* paragraphs 641 *et seq.*

The duties of such officers have been briefly suggested at paragraph 642, and experience would be found to extend or modify the list.

It is at this point, we think, that a beginning should be made. The first duty of such officers would be to see to the enforcement of existing laws—many of which are in practical abeyance from the lack of such supervision—and thenceforward the introduction of new and necessary provisions would become easier. Each Provincial officer should make himself acquainted at first hand with the circumstances of every village in his province, and would thus become available for all measures that may hereafter be taken in connection with this subject.

815. Another matter of universal application throughout the Colony, to which early attention should be given, is the promotion of measures for the avoidance of yaws (*coko*)—*vide* paragraphs 472—474.

The nature of this disease requires that it should be simultaneously stamped out in every part of the Colony; but that is probably a duty too heavy to enter on until the way has been well prepared.

When, however, it is entered on the sanitary officers will be of much service in supervising the work; and with the view of gaining experience, and at the same time of educating public opinion on the subject, we should like to see steps taken soon to carry out our recommendations in one island,—say Kadavu or Beqa.

If *coko* could be eradicated from one island measures could be taken to prevent its reintroduction there; a commencement would have been made in the suppression of the disease; and valuable experience would have been gained both by the Government and the Natives, which could be applied in the furtherance of the general result.

816. We may be met by the criticism that in colonies where concerted efforts have already been made towards the eradication of yaws—as in some of the West Indian settlements and in some districts of Ceylon—success has not been attained. To this argument we would reply that their failure has depended upon,—(1) The unreadiness of the medical authorities in past times to accept contagion, *i.e.*, inoculation, as the sole means by which it is propagated;* and (2) The lack of facilities such as we possess for controlling the movements of the subjects. In our own Colony the general opinion is that inoculation alone is responsible for the dissemination of this disease, and we do not oppose that view.

817. In further considering the order of the application of the proposed remedies we have been met by the question as to whether in the beginning it would be better to distribute the remedies severally among the respective provinces of the Colony or to initiate a number of them in one province as a test.

We are of opinion that in following the latter mode the various experiments would have most chance of success.

818. We think, therefore, that one province should at first be selected in which to apply a number of the remedies, and we would suggest Ba as the province most suitable.

Ba

* Report on Leprosy and Yaws in the West Indies; by Dr. Gavin Milroy.—London, 1873.
Report on Parangi Disease; by Dr. Kynsey.—Colombo, 1881.

Ba is a province possessing good pastoral resources, and land suited for grain crops. Communication between it and Suva is not only frequent but easy, whether by sea or land; while locomotion within the province itself is less difficult than in most others, as it already possesses fairly good roads.

In Ba there is already a Medical Officer, and provision has been made for the erection of a Provincial Hospital.

To this, we think, should at once be added a Ladies' Sanitary Mission. A commencement might be made with two Sisters or even with one.

This would prepare the way for the organisation of Village Crèches, a few of which might be established on trial.

So soon as the land boundaries have been settled,—a work now nearing completion in the province of Ba,—it might be considered whether our proposal as to concentrated villages could with advantage be adopted there.

The institution of such primary measures as these would help in giving effect to our minor and less definite proposals, many of which would follow as the natural complement of the others.

819. Some of these minor proposals depend on the initiation of Legislative measures, others on Executive action, while some are of an Educational nature or such as might with advantage be discussed by the Native Councils.

They have been roughly divided under these heads in the following list:—

Legislative.

- A Regulation to compel the annual planting of cocoanuts in villages adapted for their growth, and to limit *tabu* placed on cocoanuts.
- A Regulation to provide better *yavus* than at present—say, four feet in height.
- A Regulation dealing with latrines, pig-keeping, and scavenging.
- A Regulation to forbid the use of tobacco by boys and girls and by women during lactation.
- A Regulation to restrain parents from exposing children infected with yaws, or healthy children to infection, and to punish those who neglect to cover yaws sores on their children or dependants.
- A Regulation to prohibit the practice of certain forms of *vakasilima*.
- Abolition of license fee for country bakers.
- Alteration of the penalty for fornication.
- Allotment of a portion of the fine for breach of the Planting Regulation to the informer.
- Amendment of Regulation No. 3 of 1883, so that chiefs of *mataqalis* be no longer required to see that the marriage customs and ceremonies are duly performed.
- Amendment of Regulation No. 1 of 1877, so that marriages, divorces, and attention to the sick be included specifically in the Schedule of Questions to be answered at Provincial Councils.

Executive.

- Improvement of position of *Vuniwai i Taukei*—(paragraph 592).
- Annual bounty to parents of five living children.
- Introduction of Barbadians.
- Concentration of towns and institution of model villages.
- Institution of a school for native midwives.
- Enforcement of Regulations relating to food-planting and *yagona*-drinking.
- Reformation of diet.
- Supply of pure drinking-water.
- Introduction of live stock, and the use of milk and flour.
- Cultivation of rice, cotton, &c.
- Alignment of villages.
- Introduction of raised bedplaces.
- Introduction of doors and windows.
- Building of wooden, stone, or log houses.

Educational

Educational and Social.

Education in sanitary and social principles by books in the vernacular.
 Issue of instructions in nursing, sick-diet, &c.
 Discouragement of *kerekere*.
 Discouragement of waste of food at meetings.
 Instruction in the English language at the Industrial School.
 Introduction of the potter's-wheel and quern.

For Discussion in Native Councils.

Registration of rights to personal *lala*.
 Question of compensating chiefs for personal *lala*.
 Encouragement of early marriages.
 Attendance of children at schools.
 Annual election of village matron to have oversight of mothers and children.
 Institution of monthly meeting of married women to discuss matters relating to the health of children.
 Reinstitution of *bure ni sa*.
 Local steps to be taken for the eradication of *coko*.
 Discouragement from field-work during first pregnancies.
 Discouragement of diving for shell-fish by women at critical times and by pregnant women and suckling-mothers.
 Prevention of field labour by women for three months after confinement.
 Relief of nursing-mothers from outdoor labour.
 Supply of good food to mothers during the whole period of lactation.
 Weekly house to house visitation by *Turaga ni mataqali*.

820. We are conscious of many shortcomings in the present result of our work.

We have mentioned in paragraph 2 that, during the course of our inquiry, we have had to carry on the work of the several Departments in our charge, and have thereby been prevented from devoting continuous attention to that of this Commission. We have now to add that since we began to frame this Report our task has been interrupted by,—firstly, the absence of one of our number from the Colony on long (European) leave; secondly, the retirement of another from the Service, and his departure to England; thirdly, two absences from the Colony on urgent private affairs on the part of one of the two remaining colleagues; and fourthly, the temporary absence from the Colony of the other one, on service.

The comparatively slender resources of the Government Printing Office have been somewhat severely strained in the printing of this Report. It became necessary to break up much of the type before the latter half of the Report was even drafted. We take this opportunity to express our obligations on this head to Mr. March (the Government Printer), who has been obliged, like ourselves, to interweave most of this work with the current undertakings of his office, and whose skill and patience have been of signal assistance to us.

We have the honour to be,
 Your Excellency,
 Your Excellency's most obedient Servants,

BOLTON GLANVILL CORNEY,
 J. STEWART,
 BASIL H. THOMSON.

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APPENDIX I.

(Referred to in paragraph 95 of the Report.)

THE story of the *Lila balavu* (Wasting Sickness) and of the *Cokadra* (Dysentery); and the *meke* (ballads) relating to those events.—*Contributed by ILAI MOTONICOCOKA.*

DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.

THE STORY OF THE "LILA BALAVU" (WASTING SICKNESS),

BY ILAI MOTONICOCOKA.

[Translation.]

ONLY two things are known about the year in which the *Lila Balavu* attacked our ancestors; it was the year in which the first European ship came, and it was the year in which the comet with three tails appeared. Our ancestors knew that the *Lila Balavu* attacked them at the time they saw the first European ship. This was the first ship they saw, but a number of others came later.

Now, our fathers have told us that when they caught the *lila* their legs felt light to them, and when they walked they reeled about, and fell down, and where they fell they lay. And they also said, "Not many died of the disease, but only those who were strangled (*yateba*) by their friends." And it is said that from the time of the *lila* the practice of strangling persons who had lain ill for a long time began, and it was called *yateba*, but the practice of strangling widows to the 'manes' of their husbands (*loloku ni mate*) was a very old one. The *loloku* is quite distinct from the *yateba*: they are in no way the same. Thus it became the custom of our ancestors in Fiji to strangle those who had been long suffering from some infectious sickness, and the custom only ceased with the introduction of Christianity.

It is quite certain that in the year when the *lila* attacked our ancestors a fearful portent appeared, namely, a forked star.

As for the *lila*, it is said that they did not nurse the sick, but that they followed the customs of an ignorant time, and this was the reason they died. It is also said that when the *lila* reached Naitasiri they suffered excessively, and so they came to drink a herb as medicine when they were attacked, and the herb cured the chiefs of Naitasiri, and quite extirpated the *lila* from that State, so they called the herb *Vueti Naitasiri* (the healer of Naitasiri), and the name has remained even to this day. Perhaps they named it so as a reminder to them that the herb had cured the men of Naitasiri of the *lila*. Now I have read in "*Na Mata*" a *meke* concerning the *lila*, and I shall now give the origin of that *meke*, and the closing stanzas. The poem was composed by two women who were captured in war from Buretu, and brought in captivity to Ratu Mara (*ko mai Vavalagi*), the grandfather of Ratu Jope, Native Magistrate of Serua, when he was living at Soso, in Bau.

It runs as follows:—

VUNIVASA.

The great sickness sits at the masthead,
Their heads are like food-baskets (for size),
Their voices sound hoarsely.
They fall and lie helpless and pitiable,
Dengei* is now put to shame,
Our own sicknesses have been thrust aside.
The strangling-rope is a noble thing,
They fall prone: they fall with the sap still in them.

MAI VUNIVIA, AU NANUMA.

What is the sickness that afflicts them? *au nanuma*,
The *lila* is spreading far and wide, *au nanuma*.
The *sira†* is the pot in which their frogs are cooked.
They go and sprawl among the rushes, *au nanuma e*.

KURA.

The old men feel listless, *au nanuma*.
The sickness is terrible, *au nanuma*.
We do not die: we do not live, *au nanuma*.
Our bellies ache: our heads ache, *au nanuma*.
Hark to the creak of the strangling-cords, *au nanuma*.
The spirits flow away like running-water, *au nanuma*.

We have fallen upon a new age, *io e*.
Infectious disease is spreading among us, *io e*.
We lie down and grow torpid, *io e*.
Many die: a few live on, *io e*.
Many die by the strangling-rope only, *io e*.
The *malo§* round their bellies rots,† *io e*.
Our women are in despair, *io e*,
The *liku||* knotted round them they do not loose, *ra tau e*.
We whistle with wonder¶ as we look at it.
What can be its meaning? *uetau*,
Can it be a sign to the chiefs? ** *e e*.

THE

* Dengei was the chief of the Fijian Thearchy.

† A small clay pot used in Vanualevu.

‡ Signifying the long duration of the sickness.

§ The *Malo* was the suspensory bandage that formed the only dress of the men.

|| *Liku*, the grass petticoat worn by the women. They were too weak to undress.

¶ *Vidikalu*, to whistle and snap the fingers,—a gesture of astonishment.

** "*Lala ni turaga*" must not be confused with *Lala ni turaga*." The former means a sign that a chief is about to die.

THE DYSENTERY.

Now some time after the *lila*, the Great Sickness, another great visitation of sickness,—a bloody flux,—afflicted our ancestors of the old time.

There were five great events in the old time of which a tradition has been handed down by our ancestors,—

- (1) The great *Lila*.
- (2) The Comet with three tails.
- (3) The Dysentery.
- (4) The Eclipse.
- (5) The Tidal Wave.

There remain to-day only a few in each province who know of these five things.

Now the dysentery, too, was a great sickness, and many were stricken by it, and many died. When the measles came upon us, in 1875, some of the old chiefs said that it was insignificant beside the *lila* and the dysentery which afflicted our ancestors of the old time.

It is said that a European vessel, sailing from the direction of Lau, brought the dysentery; and the places at which this vessel called are known from the *meke* which I give hereunder: from this you may know at what islands the vessel that brought the dysentery touched. It is certain that at that time there were two ships only that had been seen by our ancestors, and it was the second of these that brought the dysentery. From the words of the *meke* it is evident that they had seen but two ships, for one of the verses runs,—

“ Captain has anchored for the second time,
The origin of our sickness is again among us.”

Now the words “*baci*” and “*baki*” have the same meaning, namely, that the event spoken of has occurred before. The meaning is that they remembered that the vessel which they first saw brought a sickness, the *lila*, among them; and they concluded that the second vessel would also bring sickness. Not long after this our ancestors were afflicted with the dysentery, and Banuve, the Vunivalu of Bau, died of it. It was for this reason that he is called *Bale i Vavalagi* (“He who died of the foreign sickness”). This was in accordance with the Fijian custom that when a man was killed they called him by the name of the place at which he was killed, as—*Bale-i-Kasavu*, *Bale-i-wai*, *Bale-i-Naloto*, &c.

It is certain that when our ancestors were attacked by the dysentery they were in the most pitiable state: no one can say how horrible was the thing that had befallen, nor how many of them perished. But it is said that from the time of the dysentery our villages began to be empty of men, while in the time before the dysentery came every village was crowded with men; there was no space between them, so crowded were they. It is not known who was the captain of the first ship that came to Fiji, for our ancestors called him by only one name—“Captain.”

Isa. Yanyau ka'u bau,
The waves of the trade-wind are roaring,
The rollers are chasing one another in quick succession,
They burst right to the end of the canoe shed,
They shake off the berries of the *vetau*,
They shower down in the doorways,
Tinani-Tokalau is picking them up and carrying them.
Carry them into the house to me,
They will do for playthings for Buatabakau.
Put him on my back that we may go out;
His mother will stay to prepare the food.
The prow of our canoe is bearing off to leeward.

The neap-tides run out quickly,
They are relating a new report,
A ship is appearing from the ocean.
They are disputing as to what she is,
Masivola gives his consent, they go and launch the
“*Vosa ni turaga*” (Chief's command—a canoe).
Bend the ropes, the canoe is to sail.
They sail towards the Kabara Sea,
They lower the sail at the stern (of the ship),
Selema let us go and clasp hands,*
You who travel about over the ocean,
There is Rotuma and Galagala,
The surf boils on Cakauyawa (distant reef—the Hades of the Rewa chiefs),
This is the land where the canoes anchor, *e*.

The foreigner's ship is hove to,
“Captain” is sailing in her,
She is freighted with our sickness,
She goes and anchors at Nukumasi.
Her flags are fluttering in the wind,
The women in the house are inquiring,
Has “Captain” again anchored here?
Let us then flee to the bush, *e*.

The land-ship has anchored,
The master of the ship is preparing,
Preparing to land on the shore,
Two *kusakusa* (rapid things) are made ready,†

They

* “Wrestle or clasp with the hands.” Handshaking was unknown to the Fijians.
† Whale-boats.

They row and anchor at the landing-place,
The Fijians run for the bush,
The cause of our death has arrived among us, *e*.

The foreigners have come again,
He is anchored at Nukucagina,
The people of Nukucagina are running to see.
The wash she makes is absurd,
Launch the canoe and I will go and look at her,
I go on board and sit there,
Let us go and trade while it is still daylight,
He dragged down the shrine,*
And held it to their faces to look into,
The sickness which is reported is really come,
Every district is emptied by it,
The warriors are bound by it,
They wither and droop their heads like the *daiga*,†
They are buried in the place of the dead (Naicibaciba).

The foreigner has sailed,
He has gone to seek an empty land,
Their chief gave the order,
Let one climb to the look-out (crow's-nest),
Look out for land to which to steer the ship.
Nairai is to windward,
Koro is on the lee beam,
The ship is sailing towards Vuya (Bua).
The foreigners are bold spirits,
They keep following the open channels, *e*.

The foreigner sails on,
The Vuya Sea begins to appear,
He hugs the reef to see the land,
He is obliged to keep outside the reef,
The look-out speaks from the fore-castle,
Lift the anchor, let us go back,
The trading ship has appeared, and the land bristles (with its masts).

The foreigners drag their vessel off,
The wind is still strong,
They sail towards the Tongan Ocean,
Load the guns, and I will stand by,
Laucala is disappearing,
I am tired of staring at the land,
We are sailing in the Gulf of Makogai,
The look-out speaks,
The point of Naicobocobo is in sight,
We are sailing through the water of the dead,
The village of Bua is in sight, *e*.

Biaunicewa goes out,
He wonders at the height of the waves,
Which burst right into the harbour,
The foreigner is hove-to,
A sickness is reported among us,
The men are swept away; the women are swept away,
They are like the plantains that have withered.
Sirivakaceva gives this order,
"Let Nukuseva be emptied, and deserted."
They heave up their anchors,
They lay them on the fore-deck,
They keep her away towards Bulebulewa, they go and anchor in the harbour, *e*.

* A mirror.

† An aroid plant that droops at sunset (*Amorphophallus*).



APPENDIX II.

(Vide paragraphs 46 to 68 and 201 to 216 of the Report.)

COMPARATIVE Vital Statistics of forty-five villages showing the relative fecundity and mortality of the five marriage groups, viz.:—(1) *Veidavolani*; (2) Natives of Different Towns (not related); (3) Fellow-townspeople (not related); (4) Relations (not specific); (5) Relations (close); with a Comparative Analysis, and Abstract.



DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.

STATEMENT showing the Children born in 1,230 families (constituting 45 of the villages in the Colony), and distinguishing between those dead and those alive at the date of the enumeration.

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
LAU PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Tubou, Lakeba	35	42	37	79	11	22	33	15	16	31	68	75	143
Nasaqalau, Lakeba	17	21	34	55	3	4	7	1	2	3	25	40	65
Yadrana, Lakeba	9	25	25	50	1	8	9	5	5	10	31	38	69
Mualevu, Mualevu	30	35	39	74	4	4	8	8	3	11	47	46	93
Mavana, Mualevu	21	42	12	54	2	...	2	5	4	9	49	16	65
Sawana, Lomaloma	29	26	8	34	8	4	12	5	3	8	39	15	54
Lomaloma, Lomaloma	20	28	30	58	...	1	1	1	3	4	29	34	63
Total	161	219	185	404	29	43	72	40	36	76	288	264	552
TAILEVU PROVINCE—6 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Namata, Tailevu	54	82	81	163	10	22	32	13	55	68	105	158	263
Dravuni, Nakelo	31	41	34	75	2	17	19	8	9	17	51	60	111
Vaturua, Nakelo }	42	64	42	106	5	3	8	5	9	14	74	54	128
Matainabou, Nakelo }	25	29	27	56	3	8	11	7	13	20	39	48	87
Naimalavau, Nakelo	28	36	21	57	6	10	16	10	16	26	52	47	99
Nabitu, Tokatoka	28	45	28	73	4	11	15	2	3	5	51	42	93
Total	208	297	233	530	30	71	101	45	105	150	372	409	781
SERUA PROVINCE—3 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Vunibau, Serua	30	38	31	69	14	14	28	15	11	26	67	56	123
Deuba, Deuba	27	37	26	63	10	20	30	9	6	15	56	52	108
Sauniveiuto, Deuba	25	37	22	59	12	18	30	5	7	12	54	47	101
Total	82	112	79	191	36	52	88	29	24	53	177	155	332
NAMOSI PROVINCE—3 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Veivatuloa, Veivatuloa	24	28	27	55	9	15	24	8	7	15	45	49	94
Mau, Veivatuloa	17	26	22	48	4	8	12	6	5	11	36	35	71
Namelimeli, Veivutaloa	12	11	13	24	1	5	6	6	4	10	18	22	40
Total	53	65	62	127	14	28	42	20	16	36	99	106	205
LOMAIVITI PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nasinu, Ovalau	15	29	33	62	1	6	7	3	6	9	33	45	78
Levuka, Levuka	22	30	27	57	6	11	17	8	12	20	44	50	94
Nasau, Levuka	34	52	54	106	10	10	20	11	10	21	73	74	147
Namacu, Levuka	36	55	56	111	9	20	29	7	14	21	71	90	161
Nabuna, Cawa	20	22	36	58	1	5	6	10	5	15	33	46	79
Vatulele, Cawa	19	16	20	36	1	2	3	5	7	12	22	29	51
Yanuca, Moturiki	16	23	32	55	4	9	13	5	8	13	32	49	81
Total	162	227	258	485	32	63	95	49	62	111	308	383	691
CAKAUDROVE PROVINCE—15 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Somosomo, Cakaudrove	56	62	48	110	25	38	63	21	30	51	108	116	224
Wairiki, Cakaudrove	30	37	48	85	19	19	38	13	16	29	69	83	152
Welagi, Cakaudrove.....	21	22	23	45	6	8	14	12	16	28	40	47	87
Naselesele, Wainikeli	24	26	35	61	4	13	17	12	22	34	42	70	112
Qeleni, Nacaugei and Navakaoa, Wainikeli, Cakaudrove	30	37	31	68	11	17	28	9	10	19	57	58	115
Nalovonivono, Cakaudrove	25	42	49	91	6	11	17	9	7	16	57	67	124
Vunidamolli, Wailevu	37	41	57	98	6	14	20	18	29	47	65	100	165
Wailevu, Wailevu	51	49	67	116	10	14	24	17	17	34	76	98	174
Naweni, Naweni	27	44	42	86	8	10	18	10	13	23	62	65	127
Valeni, Wailevu	30	28	26	54	10	8	18	16	22	38	54	56	110
Mataisea, Wailevu	29	20	39	59	4	15	19	6	22	28	30	76	106
Nagigi, Nagigi	28	19	40	59	9	31	40	22	32	54	50	103	153
Natuvu, Wailevu	25	19	26	45	7	14	21	6	21	27	32	61	93
Tacilevu, Cakaudrove	27	31	45	76	8	18	26	4	20	24	43	83	126
Korocau, Wainikeli	25	37	54	91	5	6	11	3	9	12	45	69	114
Total	465	514	630	1,144	138	236	374	178	286	464	830	1,152	1,982
KADAVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nakasaleka, Nakasaleka	23	32	33	65	5	1	6	5	8	13	42	42	84
Nakoronawa, Nakasaleka.....	22	27	35	62	12	12	24	5	9	14	44	56	100
Vabea, Ono	27	57	42	99	5	18	23	10	6	16	72	66	138
Rakiraki, Yale	27	39	18	57	11	5	16	3	2	5	53	25	78
Total	99	155	128	283	33	36	69	23	25	48	211	189	400
Average	1,230	1,589	1,575	3,164	312	529	841	384	554	938	2,285	2,658	4,943
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	1'3	1'2	2'5	2	4	6	3	4	7	1'8	2'1	4'0
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	50'2	49'8	...	37'1	62'9	...	40'9	59'1	...	46'2	53'8	...

Veidavolani.

STATEMENT showing the number of Families in 45 towns of the Colony in which the parents were related in the degree of *Veidavolani*, and the number of Children born in those families, distinguishing between those alive and those dead at the date of the enumeration.

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
LAU PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Tubou, Lakeba	14	20	17	37	1	8	9	3	1	4	24	26	50
Nasaqalau, Lakeka	12	14	13	27	1	2	3	1	2	3	16	17	33
Yadrana, Lakeka	7	17	20	37	1	6	7	5	5	10	23	31	54
Mualevu, Mualevu	6	5	11	16	...	...	...	1	1	2	6	12	18
Mavana, Mualevu	7	13	6	19	1	...	1	...	...	...	14	6	20
Lomaloma, Lomalama	2	7	4	11	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	4	11
Sawana, Lomaloma .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	48	76	71	147	4	16	20	10	9	19	90	96	186
TAILEVU PROVINCE—6 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Namata, Tailevu	21	38	21	59	3	1	4	3	17	20	44	39	83
Dravuni, Nakelo	9	15	11	26	1	9	10	3	2	5	19	22	41
Vaturua, Nakelo	8	8	7	15	2	...	2	1	1	2	11	8	19
Naimalavau, Nakelo,	13	25	12	37	1	1	2	4	3	7	30	16	46
Matainabou, Nakelo .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nabitu, Tokatoka .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	51	86	51	137	7	11	18	11	23	34	104	85	189
SERUA PROVINCE—3 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Vunibau, Serua	12	15	11	26	5	7	12	3	6	9	23	24	47
Deuba, Deuba	8	15	19	34	2	3	5	1	...	1	18	22	40
Sauniveiuto, Deuba	5	7	4	11	2	4	6	...	...	...	9	8	17
Total	25	37	34	71	9	14	23	4	6	10	50	54	104
NAMOSI PROVINCE—3 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Veivatuloa, Veivatuloa	1	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Mau, Veivatuloa	12	19	16	35	3	6	9	4	3	7	26	25	51
Namelimeli, Veivatuloa	11	10	13	23	1	5	6	6	4	10	17	22	39
Total	24	31	29	60	4	11	15	10	7	17	45	47	92
LOMAIVITI PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nasinu, Ovalau	1	2	4	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	6
Levuka, Levuka	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	2	6	4	2	6
Nasau, Levuka	9	17	21	38	2	...	2	1	...	1	20	21	41
Namacu, Levuka	12	20	19	39	...	...	...	2	4	6	22	23	45
Nabuna, Cawa	5	9	9	18	...	2	2	...	...	...	9	11	20
Vatulele, Cawa	8	12	9	21	...	...	...	1	2	3	13	11	24
Yanuca, Moturiki	3	2	2	4	...	...	...	...	3	3	2	5	7
Total	39	62	64	126	2	2	4	8	11	19	72	77	149
CAKAUDROVE PROVINCE—14 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Somosomo, Cakaudrove	26	31	23	54	9	14	23	6	11	17	46	48	94
Wairiki, Cakaudrove	2	1	2	3	...	1	1	...	1	1	1	4	5
Welagi, Cakaudrove	5	5	4	9	...	2	2	2	4	6	7	10	17
Naselesele, Wainikeli	8	11	22	33	...	1	1	2	4	6	13	27	40
Qeleni, Nacangei and Navakaoa, Wainikeli, Cakaudrove	20	25	22	47	7	8	15	5	7	12	37	37	74
Nalovonivono, Cakaudrove	5	13	8	21	3	4	7	1	...	1	17	12	29
Vunidamoli, Wailevu	13	13	14	27	3	3	6	8	15	23	24	32	56
Wailevu, Wailevu	4	4	9	13	1	4	5	...	...	...	5	13	18
Naweni, Naweni	2	3	1	4	...	...	...	1	1	2	4	2	6
Valeni, Wailevu	6	7	10	17	3	3	6	4	1	5	14	14	28
Mataisea, Wailevu	5	8	10	18	1	6	7	1	2	3	10	18	28
Nagigi, Nagigi	3	2	1	3	...	2	2	2	4	6	4	7	11
Natuvu, Wailevu	6	7	7	14	3	5	8	1	3	4	11	15	26
Tacilevu, Cakaudrove	3	...	7	7	...	2	2	1	1	2	1	10	11
Total	108	130	140	270	30	55	85	34	54	88	194	249	443
KADAVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nakasaleka, Nakasaleka	3	6	1	7	2	...	2	...	1	1	8	2	10
Nakoronawa, Nakasaleka	4	4	1	5	...	1	1	...	...	...	4	2	6
Vabea, Ono	5	17	15	32	1	1	2	...	...	...	18	16	34
Rakiraki, Yale	3	6	2	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2	8
Total	15	33	19	52	3	2	5	...	1	1	36	22	58
Proportion to total	310	455	408	863	59	111	170	77	111	188	591	630	1,221
Average	25·3	28·6	25·9	27·3	18·9	20·9	20·2	20·1	20·1	20·1	25·9	23·7	24·7
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	1·5	1·3	2·8	·2	·3	·5	·2	·4	·6	1·9	2·0	3·9
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	52·7	47·3	...	34·7	65·3	...	40·9	59·1	...	48·4	51·6	...

Natives of different Towns—(not related).

STATEMENT showing the number of Families in 45 towns in the Colony in which the parents were not related and belonged to different towns, and the number of Children born in those families, distinguishing between those alive and those dead at the date of the enumeration.

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
LAU PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Tubou, Lakeba	16	18	17	35	6	7	13	10	9	19	34	33	67
Nasaqalau, Lakeba	5	7	21	28	2	2	4	...	...	...	9	23	32
Yadrana, Lakeba	2	8	5	13	...	2	2	...	...	...	8	7	15
Mualevu, Mualevu	9	7	7	14	4	3	7	4	2	6	15	12	27
Mavana, Mualevu	6	11	1	12	...	...	...	3	2	5	14	3	17
Sawana, Lomaloma	28	23	8	31	7	4	11	4	2	6	34	14	48
Lomaloma, Lomaloma	10	12	10	22	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	10	22
Total	76	86	69	155	19	18	37	21	15	36	126	102	228
TAILEVU PROVINCE—6 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Namata, Tailevu	4	9	4	13	...	4	4	1	2	3	10	10	20
Dravuni, Nakelo	4	6	4	10	...	1	1	...	...	...	6	5	11
Vaturua, Nakelo	4	3	1	4	2	1	3	...	...	...	5	2	7
Matainabou, Nakelo	4	2	2	4	2	3	5	1	4	5	5	9	14
Naimalavau, Nakelo	4	2	4	6	...	4	4	...	6	6	2	14	16
Nabitu, Tokatoka	6	7	3	10	1	4	5	...	...	...	8	7	15
Total	26	29	18	47	5	17	22	2	12	14	36	47	83
SERUA PROVINCE—2 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Deuba, Deuba	8	5	2	7	5	10	15	6	5	11	16	17	33
Sauniveiuto, Deuba	9	13	11	24	4	10	14	1	2	3	18	23	41
Total	17	18	13	31	9	20	29	7	7	14	34	40	74
NAMOSI Province—3 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Veivatuloa, Veivatuloa	8	9	5	14	1	6	7	2	5	7	12	16	28
Mau, Veivatuloa	4	7	6	13	...	2	2	2	2	4	9	10	19
Namelimeli, Veivatuloa .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	12	16	11	27	1	8	9	4	7	11	21	26	47
LOMAIVITI PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nasinu, Ovalau	10	19	19	38	1	6	7	3	4	7	23	29	52
Levuka, Levuka	8	9	8	17	4	7	11	3	5	8	16	20	36
Nasau, Levuka	7	8	8	16	2	2	4	6	6	12	16	16	32
Namacu, Levuka	9	7	6	13	4	10	14	...	3	3	11	19	30
Nabuna, Cawa	8	7	16	23	1	1	2	6	3	9	14	20	34
Vatulele, Cawa	6	1	5	6	1	1	2	3	2	5	5	8	13
Yanuca, Moturiki	6	9	9	18	4	5	9	1	1	2	14	15	29
Total	54	60	71	131	17	32	49	22	24	46	99	127	226
CAKAUDROVE PROVINCE—15 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Somosomo, Cakaudrove	13	13	10	23	7	10	17	2	8	10	22	28	50
Wairiki, Cakaudrove	15	17	14	31	4	9	13	5	7	12	26	30	56
Welagi, Cakaudrove	4	4	3	7	1	1	2	...	2	2	5	6	11
Naselesele, Wainikeli	11	13	11	24	1	6	7	5	11	16	19	28	47
Qeleni, Nacaugei and Navakaoa, Wainikeli, Cakaudrove	6	7	6	13	2	4	6	3	...	3	12	10	22
Nalovonivono, Cakaudrove	11	19	13	32	2	5	7	5	4	9	26	22	48
Vunidamoli, Wailevu	3	6	4	10	...	...	...	1	2	3	7	6	13
Wailevu, Wailevu	31	28	40	68	3	2	5	12	11	23	43	53	96
Naweni, Naweni	8	12	6	18	1	2	3	4	9	13	17	17	34
Valeni, Wailevu	23	20	16	36	6	5	11	11	20	31	37	41	78
Mataisea, Wailevu	4	2	3	5	...	1	1	1	4	5	3	8	11
Nagigi, Nagigi	15	11	17	28	2	12	14	16	20	36	29	49	78
Natuvu, Wailevu	16	8	14	22	4	8	12	4	18	22	16	40	56
Tacilevu, Cakaudrove	13	16	15	31	6	10	16	1	14	15	23	39	62
Korocau, Wainikeli	7	15	14	29	2	1	3	...	4	4	17	19	36
Total	180	191	186	377	41	76	117	70	134	204	302	396	698
KADAVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nakasaleka, Nakasaleka	15	20	17	37	3	1	4	4	6	10	27	24	51
Nakoronawa, Nakasaleka	11	13	21	34	8	7	15	2	4	6	23	32	55
Vabea, Ono	15	27	15	42	3	11	14	7	5	12	37	31	68
Rakiraki, Yale	6	10	3	13	1	...	1	2	...	2	13	3	16
Total	47	70	56	126	15	19	34	15	15	30	100	90	190
Proportion to total	412	470	424	894	107	190	297	141	214	355	718	828	1,546
Average	33.5	29.6	26.9	28.3	34.3	35.9	35.3	36.7	38.6	37.8	31.4	31.5	31.4
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	1.1	1.0	2.1	2	5	7	3	5	8	1.7	2.0	3.7
	...	52.6	47.4	...	36.0	64.0	...	39.9	60.1	...	46.1	53.9	...

Fellow-townspople (not related).

STATEMENT showing the number of Families in 45 towns of the Colony in which the parents were not related but were fellow-townspople, and the number of Children born in these families, distinguishing between those alive and those dead at the date of the enumeration.

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
LAU PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Tubou, Lakeba	4	3	2	5	4	4	8	...	1	1	7	7	14
Nasaqalau, Lakeba .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yadrana, Lakeba .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mualevu, Mualevu	14	23	13	36	...	1	1	3	...	3	26	14	40
Mavana, Mualevu.....	8	18	5	23	1	...	1	2	2	4	21	7	28
Sawana, Lomaloma .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lomaloma, Lomaloma.....	8	9	16	25	...	1	1	1	3	4	10	20	30
Total	34	53	36	89	5	6	11	6	6	12	64	48	112
TAILEVU PROVINCE—6 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Namata, Tailevu	4	3	4	7	3	3	6	4	6	10	10	13	23
Dravuni, Nakelo	13	17	12	29	...	1	1	5	6	11	22	19	41
Vaturua, Nakelo	29	52	34	86	1	2	3	4	8	12	57	44	101
Matainabou, Nakelo.....	19	27	25	52	1	5	6	3	7	10	31	37	68
Naimalavau, Nakelo.....	11	9	5	14	5	5	10	6	7	13	20	17	37
Nabitu, Tokatoka	22	38	25	63	3	7	10	2	3	5	43	35	78
Total	98	146	105	251	13	23	36	24	37	61	183	165	348
SERUA PROVINCE—3 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Vunibau, Serua.....	18	23	20	43	9	7	16	12	5	17	44	32	76
Deuba, Deuba	9	11	4	15	2	5	7	2	1	3	15	10	25
Sauniveito, Deuba	11	17	7	24	6	4	10	4	5	9	27	16	43
Total	38	51	31	82	17	16	33	18	11	29	86	58	144
NAMOSI PROVINCE—2 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Veivatuloa, Veivatuloa	7	8	13	21	1	1	2	4	1	5	13	15	28
Mau, Veivatuloa	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1
Total	8	8	13	21	2	1	3	4	1	5	14	15	29
LOMAIVITI PROVINCE—7 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nasinu, Ovalau	4	8	10	18	...	...	...	...	2	2	8	12	20
Levuka, Levuka	10	18	15	33	2	4	6	1	5	6	21	24	45
Nasau, Levuka	18	27	25	52	6	8	14	4	4	8	37	37	74
Namacu, Levuka	11	19	25	44	3	6	9	4	4	8	26	35	61
Nabuna, Cawa	7	6	11	17	...	2	2	4	2	6	10	15	25
Vatulele, Cawa	3	1	5	6	...	1	1	1	3	4	2	9	11
Yanuca, Moturiki	2	3	7	10	...	...	...	1	...	1	4	7	11
Total	55	82	98	180	11	21	32	15	20	35	108	139	247
CAKAUDROVE PROVINCE—12 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Somosomo, Cakaudrove	14	17	14	31	9	12	21	13	11	24	39	37	76
Wairiki, Cakaudrove	7	8	18	26	4	2	6	5	3	8	17	23	40
Welagi, Cakaudrove.....	8	10	9	19	1	2	3	7	6	13	18	17	35
Nalovonivono, Cakaudrove	1	...	...	...	1	2	3	3	...	3	4	2	6
Vunidamoli, Wailevu	16	18	27	45	2	11	13	9	10	19	29	48	77
Wailevu, Wailevu.....	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Naweni, Naweni	16	25	33	58	6	8	14	4	3	7	35	44	79
Mataisea, Wailevu	9	6	16	22	...	...	...	1	4	5	7	20	27
Nagigi, Nagigi	8	4	14	18	4	7	11	3	7	10	11	28	39
Natuvu, Wailevu	2	2	1	3	...	1	1	1	...	1	3	2	5
Tacilevu, Cakaudrove	7	10	18	28	1	4	5	...	4	4	11	26	37
Korocau, Wainikeli	6	4	9	13	...	2	2	2	3	5	6	14	20
Total	95	104	160	264	28	51	79	48	51	99	180	262	442
KADAVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Nakasaleka, Nakasaleka	3	2	11	13	...	...	...	1	1	2	3	12	15
Nakoronawa, Nakasaleka.....	2	3	1	4	...	...	...	1	3	4	4	4	8
Vabea, Ono	5	8	9	17	1	6	7	3	1	4	12	16	28
Rakiraki, Yale	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...
Total	11	13	21	34	1	6	7	5	5	10	19	32	51
Proportion to total	339	457	464	921	77	124	201	120	131	251	654	719	1,373
Average	27·6	28·8	29·5	29·1	24·7	23·5	23·9	31·2	23·4	26·7	28·7	26·7	27·7
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	1·3	1·4	2·7	·2	·4	·6	·3	·4	·7	1·9	2·1	4·0
	...	49·6	50·4	...	38·3	61·7	...	47·8	52·2	...	47·7	52·3	...

Relations (not specific).

STATEMENT showing the number of Families in 45 towns of the Colony in which the parents were related but not in any specific degree, and the number of Children born in these families, distinguishing between those alive and those dead at the date of the enumeration.

Town.	No of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
LAU PROVINCE—2 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Mualevu, Mualevu	1	...	8	8	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	8
Sawana, Lomaloma	1	3	...	3	1	...	1	1	1	2	5	1	6
Total	2	3	8	11	1	...	1	1	1	2	5	9	14
TAILEVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Namata, Tailevu	24	32	49	81	4	14	18	5	30	35	41	93	134
Dravuni, Nakelo	3	3	6	9	...	4	4	...	...	...	3	10	13
Matainabou, Nakelo	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	2	5	3	2	5
Naimalavau, Nakelo .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	28	35	55	90	4	18	22	8	32	40	47	105	152
SERUA PROVINCE—1 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Deuba, Deuba	2	6	1	7	1	2	3	...	..	...	7	3	10
NAMOSI PROVINCE—1 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Veivatuloa, Veivatuloa	4	4	3	7	5	3	8	...	..	...	9	6	15
LOMAIVITI PROVINCE—2 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Levuka, Levuka	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vatulele, Cawa	1	2	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Total	3	2	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
CAKAUDROVE PROVINCE—12 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Somosomo, Cakaudrove	3	1	1	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	1	3	4
Wairiki, Cakaudrove	5	11	12	23	9	7	16	3	3	6	23	22	45
Welagi, Cakaudrove	3	2	5	7	4	3	7	3	3	6	9	11	20
Naselesele, Wainikeli	3	2	2	4	2	2	4	4	2	6	8	6	14
Qeleni, Nacaugei and Navakaoa, Wainikeli, Cakaudrove	3	5	2	7	2	5	7	1	3	4	8	10	18
Nalovonivono, Cakaudrove	8	10	28	38	...	...	...	...	3	3	10	31	41
Vunidamoli, Wailevu	5	4	12	16	1	...	1	...	2	2	5	14	19
Wailevu, Wailevu	14	16	17	33	5	8	13	5	6	11	26	31	57
Valeni, Wailevu	1	1	...	1	1	...	1	1	1	2	3	1	4
Mataisea, Wailevu	10	4	9	13	3	8	11	3	12	15	10	29	39
Natuvu, Wailevu	1	2	4	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	6
Tacilevu, Cakaudrove	4	5	5	10	1	2	3	2	1	3	8	8	16
Total	60	63	97	160	28	37	65	22	36	58	113	170	283
KADAVU PROVINCE—1 of the Towns, viz. :—													
Rakiraki, Yale	3	1	1	2	2	4	6	...	1	1	3	6	9
Proportion to total	8.2	7.1	10.5	8.8	13.1	12.1	12.5	8.1	12.6	10.8	8.1	11.3	9.8
Average .....	...	1.1	1.7	2.8	4	6	1.0	3	7	1.0	1.8	3.0	4.8
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	40.7	59.3	...	39.0	61.0	...	30.7	69.3	...	38.3	61.7	...

Relations (close).

STATEMENT showing the number of Families in 45 towns of the Colony in which the parents were closely related (excluding the degree of *Veidavolani*) and the number of Children born in those families, distinguishing between those alive and those dead at the date of the enumeration.

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
LAU PROVINCE—1 of the Towns, viz. :— Tubou, Lakeba (<i>Veivugoni</i>)	1	1	1	2	...	3	3	2	5	7	3	9	12
TAILEVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :— Namata, Tailevu (<i>Veivugoni</i>)	1	...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	3
Dravuni, Nakelo (<i>Veitamani</i>)	2	...	1	1	1	2	3	...	1	1	1	4	5
Vaturua, Nakelo (<i>Veitamani</i>)	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Matainabou, Tailevu (<i>Veiganeni</i>)	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	5	1	4	5	1	2	3	...	1	1	2	7	9
NAMOSI PROVINCE—2 of the Towns, viz. :— Veivatulua, Veivatulua (<i>Veitacini</i> , &c.) ..	4	5	6	11	2	5	7	2	1	3	9	12	21
Namelimeli, Veivatulua (<i>Veiluvani</i>) ...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Total	5	6	6	12	2	5	7	2	1	3	10	12	22
LOMAIVITI PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :— Levuka, Levuka (<i>Veiganeni</i>)	1	3	4	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	4	7
Namacu, Levuka (<i>Veiluvani</i> , &c.)	4	9	6	15	2	4	6	1	3	4	12	13	25
Vatulele, Cawa (<i>Veiganeni</i>)	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yanuca, Moturiki (<i>Veivugoni</i> , &c.) ...	5	9	14	23	...	4	4	3	4	7	12	22	34
Total	11	21	24	45	2	8	10	4	7	11	27	39	66
CAKAUDROVE PROVINCE—9 of the Towns, viz. :— Wairiki, Cakaudrove (<i>Veitacini</i>)	1	...	2	2	2	...	2	...	2	2	2	4	6
Welagi, Cakaudrove (<i>Veitacini</i>)	1	1	2	3	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	3	4
Naselesele, Wainikeli (<i>Veiganeni</i>)	2	...	...	...	1	4	5	1	5	6	2	9	11
Qeleni, Nacaugei and Navakaoa, Wainikeli (<i>Veitacini</i>)	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Wailevu, Wailevu (<i>Veitinani</i>)	1	1	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	2
Naweni, Naweni (<i>Veiganeni</i>)	1	4	2	6	1	...	1	1	...	1	6	2	8
Mataisea, Wailevu (<i>Veiganeni</i>)	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Nagigi, Nagigi (<i>Veitamani</i> , &c.)	2	2	8	10	3	10	13	1	1	2	6	19	25
Korocau, Wainikeli (<i>Veiganeni</i> , &c.) ..	12	18	31	49	3	3	6	1	2	3	22	36	58
Total	22	26	47	73	11	17	28	4	11	15	41	75	116
KADAVU PROVINCE—4 of the Towns, viz. :— Nakasaleka, Nakasaleka (<i>Veiluvani</i>) ...	2	4	4	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	4	8
Nakoronawa, Nakasaleka (<i>Veiluvani</i>) ..	5	7	12	19	4	4	8	2	2	4	13	18	31
Vabea, Ono (<i>Veivugoni</i>)	2	5	3	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	3	8
Rakiraki, Yale (<i>Veiganeni</i> , &c.)	14	22	12	34	8	1	9	1	1	2	31	14	45
Total	23	38	31	69	12	5	17	3	3	6	53	39	92
Proportion to total	67	93	113	206	28	40	68	15	28	43	136	181	317
Average	5.4	5.9	7.2	6.5	9.0	7.6	8.1	3.9	5.1	4.6	5.9	6.8	6.4
Proportion per cent. alive and dead .....	...	1.4	1.7	3.1	4	6	1.0	2	4	6	2.0	2.7	4.7
	...	45.1	54.9	...	41.1	58.9	...	34.9	65.1	...	42.9	57.1	...

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS of the enumeration of the Families of 45 towns in the Colony showing the division of the families according as the parents are *Veidavolani*, Natives of different Towns (unrelated), Fellow-townspople (unrelated), Relations (distant), and Relations (close).

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.			
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	
TOTALS :—														
<i>Veidavolani</i>	310	455	408	863	59	111	170	77	111	188	591	630	1,221	
Natives of different Towns	412	470	424	894	107	190	297	141	214	355	718	828	1,546	
Townspople (not related)	339	457	464	921	77	124	201	120	131	251	654	719	1,373	
Relations (distant)	102	114	166	280	41	64	105	31	70	101	186	300	486	
Relations (close)	67	93	113	206	28	40	68	15	28	43	136	181	317	
Grand Total	1,230	1,589	1,575	3,164	312	529	841	384	554	938	2,285	2,658	4,943	
PROPORTION TO GRAND TOTAL :—														
<i>Veidavolani</i>	25.3	28.6	25.9	27.3	18.9	20.9	20.2	20.1	20.1	20.1	25.9	23.7	24.7	
Natives of different Towns	33.5	29.6	26.9	28.3	34.3	35.9	35.3	36.7	38.6	37.8	31.4	31.5	31.4	
Townspople (not related)	27.6	28.8	29.5	29.1	24.7	23.5	23.9	31.2	23.4	26.7	28.7	26.7	27.7	
Relations (distant)	8.2	7.1	10.5	8.8	13.1	12.1	12.5	8.1	12.6	10.8	8.1	11.3	9.8	
Relations (close)	5.4	5.9	7.2	6.5	9.0	7.6	8.1	3.9	5.1	4.6	5.9	6.8	6.4	
PROPORTION ALIVE AND DEAD :—														
<i>Veidavolani</i> .....	...	52.7	47.3	...	34.7	65.3	...	40.9	59.1	...	48.4	51.6	...
Natives of different Towns .....	...	52.6	47.4	...	36.0	64.0	...	39.9	60.1	...	46.1	53.9	...
Townspople (not related) .....	...	49.6	50.4	...	38.3	61.7	...	47.8	52.2	...	47.7	52.3	...
Relations (distant) .....	...	40.7	59.3	...	39.0	61.0	...	30.7	69.3	...	38.3	61.7	...
Relations (close) .....	...	45.1	54.9	...	41.1	58.9	...	34.9	65.1	...	42.9	57.1	...
Grand Total .....	...	50.2	49.8	...	37.1	62.9	...	40.9	59.1	...	46.2	53.8	...
AVERAGE PER FAMILY :—														
<i>Veidavolani</i> .....	...	1.5	1.3	2.8	.2	.3	.5	.2	.4	.6	1.9	2.0	3.9
Natives of different Towns .....	...	1.1	1.0	2.1	.2	.5	.7	.3	.5	.8	1.7	2.0	3.7
Townspople (not related) .....	...	1.3	1.4	2.7	.2	.4	.6	.3	.4	.7	1.9	2.1	4.0
Relations (distant) .....	...	1.1	1.7	2.8	.4	.6	1.0	.3	.7	1.0	1.8	3.0	4.8
Relations (close) .....	...	1.4	1.7	3.1	.4	.6	1.0	.2	.4	.6	2.0	2.7	4.7
Grand Total .....	...	1.3	1.2	2.5	.2	.4	.6	.3	.4	.7	1.8	2.1	4.0

Abstract.

SHOWING in respect of each of the five classes into which the population has been divided in this enumeration—
(1) The total number of Families and of Children therein, alive and dead; (2) The proportion which such total bears to that of the whole enumeration of the 45 towns; (3) The proportion of Children alive and dead in the said families; and (4) The average number of Children in each Family, alive and dead.

Town.	No. of Families.	Children of the Family.			Husband's Children.			Wife's Children.			Total.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
<i>Veidavolani</i> —Total	310	455	408	863	59	111	170	77	111	188	591	630	1,221
Do. Proportion to grand total	25.3	28.6	25.9	27.3	18.9	20.9	20.2	20.1	20.1	20.1	25.9	23.7	24.7
Do. Do. alive and dead .....	...	52.7	47.3	...	34.7	65.3	...	40.9	59.1	...	48.4	51.6	...
Do. Average per family .....	...	1.5	1.3	2.8	.2	.3	.5	.2	.4	.6	1.9	2.0	3.9
Natives of different Towns	412	470	424	894	107	190	297	141	214	355	718	828	1,546
Do. Proportion to grand total	33.5	29.6	26.9	28.3	34.3	35.9	35.3	36.7	38.6	37.8	31.4	31.5	31.4
Do. Do. alive and dead .....	...	52.6	47.4	...	36.0	64.0	...	39.9	60.1	...	46.1	53.9	...
Do. Average per family .....	...	1.1	1.0	2.1	.2	.5	.7	.3	.5	.8	1.7	2.0	3.7
Townspople—not related	339	457	464	921	77	124	201	120	131	251	655	717	1,372
Do. Proportion to grand total	27.6	28.8	29.5	29.1	24.7	23.5	23.9	31.2	23.4	26.7	28.7	26.7	27.7
Do. Do. alive and dead .....	...	49.6	50.4	...	38.3	61.7	...	47.8	52.2	...	47.7	52.3	...
Do. Average per family .....	...	1.3	1.4	2.7	.2	.4	.6	.3	.4	.7	1.9	2.1	4.0
Relations—Distant	102	114	166	280	41	64	105	31	70	101	186	300	486
Do. Proportion to grand total	8.2	7.1	10.5	8.8	13.1	12.1	12.5	8.1	12.6	10.8	8.1	11.3	9.8
Do. Do. alive and dead .....	...	40.7	59.3	...	39.0	61.0	...	30.7	69.3	...	38.3	61.7	...
Do. Average per family .....	...	1.1	1.7	2.8	.4	.6	1.0	.3	.7	1.0	1.8	3.0	4.8
Relations—Close	67	93	113	206	28	40	68	15	28	43	136	181	317
Do. Proportion to grand total	5.4	5.9	7.2	6.5	9.0	7.6	8.1	3.9	5.1	4.6	5.9	6.8	6.4
Do. Do. alive and dead .....	...	45.1	54.9	...	41.1	58.9	...	34.9	65.1	...	42.9	57.1	...
Do. Average per family .....	...	1.4	1.7	3.1	.4	.6	1.0	.2	.4	.6	2.0	2.7	4.7
TOTAL :—													
Grand Total	1,230	1,589	1,575	3,164	312	529	841	384	554	938	2,286	2,656	4,942
Proportion, Alive and Dead .....	...	50.2	49.8	...	37.1	62.9	...	40.9	59.1	...	46.2	53.8	...
Average per Family .....	...	1.3	1.2	2.5	.2	.4	.6	.3	.4	.7	1.8	2.1	4.0

APPENDIX III.

**CIRCULAR Letter, addressed by the Colonial Secretary
to Colonists inviting an expression of their
opinion on the causes of the Decrease of the
Native Population.**

DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Suva, 30th December, 1891.

Sir,

I am directed by the Governor to invite your co-operation and an expression of your views in respect of the following very important matter.

It is doubtless within your personal knowledge that ever since the discovery of the islands of the Pacific by the early navigators their inhabitants appear, from causes as yet not wholly understood, to have rapidly declined in numbers, until, at the present day, many islands appear in a fair way of becoming depopulated.

In this course of events the Fiji Islands form no exception; and from time to time the subject has been recorded and referred to by Consular and other officers of the Crown residing in or visiting the Group prior to the date of Cession, as well as by members of the Mission Churches which have been established since the middle of the present century.

It may, in this connection, be convenient to refer to New Zealand, Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and Hawaii, the circumstances of which places respectively present many salient points of difference. The decrease in native population throughout the island groups of the Pacific, whatever their circumstances, is, however, not less remarkable and painful than it is certain.

In New Zealand and Hawaii the natives, since the time of early settlement in those countries, have lived to all intents and purposes upon the same free footing as settlers and colonists of European extraction. That is to say, they have not been the subject of exceptional treatment at the hands of Government. The only especial restrictions in either place worthy of notice as affecting native life are laws relating to the prohibition of alcoholic liquors. But there is reason to think that in neither place have the laws referred to been rigorously or consistently administered. In Tahiti there are no special laws known to his Excellency relating exclusively to the native race.

The Navigators' Group (or Samoa) has up to the present moment enjoyed no settled form of government. The natives have drunk and fought, lived and died, pretty much as pleased them, under all the circumstances in which they have in the course of time found themselves.

At Tonga a Native Government of a somewhat exclusive character has existed for the last twenty or twenty-five years. Alcohol has not been commonly used.

In each of these several groups, however, notwithstanding the different conditions indicated, the mortality has been very great. It would almost appear, therefore, that the cause of this decadence of race is attributable, less to the form of their governments respectively, or to the differing conditions springing therefrom, than to evils existing in the social and domestic life of the people.

It has been already observed that Fiji presents no exception in respect of the question under consideration, though it is possible, and in some quarters it is believed, that the circumstances differ in degree, and that the difference, so far as it goes, is in favour of this Colony.

That the mortality among the natives of Fiji was very severe during the period antecedent to the date of the cession of the Colony is within the knowledge of all the elder missionaries and other residents.

As far back as the year 1867 His Excellency, then Acting British Consul for Fiji and Tonga, had his attention very constantly drawn to the subject, and in a despatch

despatch to the Right Honourable the Earl of Derby, dealing in part with this subject, he wrote as under:—

“I have received the following authentic information with regard to births and deaths at three places during the past year. The first town is situated on the island of Ovalau, which contains the principal port of the Group, and is the residence of the greater portion of the white people. The second is one of the divisions of Bau, at which place the only European residents are the mission family. The third place—Ba—is situated on the north coast of Vitilevu. No Europeans reside there, and European visitors are rare:

Place.	Births.	Deaths.
Bureta	7	48
Soso	7	31
Ba	0	60.”

Again, in the year 1881, the Rev. Lorimer Fison, M.A., for many years a resident missionary in this Group, and a gentleman well known in connection with anthropological studies here and in Australia, as well as for the accuracy of his observations, wrote as follows regarding the native population:—

“The causes of the undoubted decrease must be looked for elsewhere (than in polygamy), and for my own part I do not know where to find them. My own opinion is that the Fijians were decreasing in number before the earliest white settlers came among them. I am sure they were decreasing long before the Group was annexed, and I see no reason to believe that the rate of decrease is any greater now than it was then.

“During the years 1868–9 I kept a record of births and deaths among the tribes on the Rewa Delta. It was a time of peace and ordinary plenty as far as those tribes are concerned.

“There was little or no drunkenness, excepting among a few of the higher chiefs; no diseases of vice, so far as I am aware, to an appreciable extent; and no more serious epidemic than a visitation of influenza and another of mumps. In short, there were no extraordinary causes of mortality, and yet during the whole period my weekly returns showed the deaths to be almost invariably in excess of the births.”

It would, therefore, appear from this and other evidence of a similarly trustworthy nature that the rate of mortality disclosed by the recent census returns—which, if the recent enumeration of the people is to be depended upon, in one decade amounts to a decrease of 8,948 in a total native population of 114,748—is not due to any new influences arising out of the establishment of settled authority over the islands.

It may further be assumed that, notwithstanding the medical care and attention now within the reach of at least a considerable number of natives, and that many native towns have been shifted from low-lying and swampy spots to higher and drier places, that war has ceased, and, generally, that much has been done with the object of improving the sanitary condition of the people, the most potent factor in native mortality has not yet been discovered.

The average birth and death rate among the native population may be gathered from the following resumé, made in September, 1888, upon the Vital Statistics of the Native Population. (The Tables referred to are necessarily omitted.)

RESUMÉ.

“The birth-rate for the past year (1887) is considerably in excess of that of previous years, being 40·10 *per mille*, which is 4·49 *per mille* more than the rate for 1886 and 1·20 *per mille* in excess of that for 1885, which was the highest rate since the 1881 census.

“The death-rate is 36·07 *per mille* against 44·45 for 1886, and 44·15 for 1885, and is the lowest death-rate since the before-mentioned census.

“The number of marriages recorded is 1,105 or 10·01 *per mille* of the population. This is slightly below the number recorded for the three previous years, but, nevertheless, rather above the average.

“The number of births registered for the past year was 4,425. There were 2,338 males and 2,087 females, giving an excess of 251 males over females. The province with the highest birth-rate is Yasawa, it being no less than 57·06 *per mille*, which is about 17 *per mille* above the average rate of the Colony for the year. The lowest birth-rate is found in the province of Macuata, viz., 33·70 *per mille*. This however,

however, is a higher rate than shown by that province for the two preceding years (30·48 for 1886 and 32·93 for 1885).

“The number of registered deaths is 3,980—2,093 males and 1,887 females—a lower number than has been recorded since 1881, and is no less than 968 fewer than the number for 1886, and 961 less than that for 1885. The provinces credited with the lowest rates are,—Naitasiri, 28·43 *per mille*; Tailevu, 31·56; Namosi, 31·81; and Ba, 31·82. Those with the highest death-rates are,—Lomaiviti, 44·57; Bua, 43·01; and Serua, 42·32. The number of births and deaths in the latter province are the same. As in previous years, the mortality of children under a year old is very high.

“There were 188 still-born children against 175 in 1886 and 163 in 1885.

“The number of divorces for the year is 45. This is much below the average. The number for 1886 was 60, and that of the year before 83.

“Table B shows the marriage, birth, and death rate for the four quarters of the year. The first quarter as before mentioned was the only one which showed a decrease. This is rather unusual, as we are wont to consider that the colder months are more fatal to the native constitution than the warm ones. But the weather for the quarter in question was exceptionally wet, and the high mortality was doubtless due to that cause.

“Table C shows the number of villages in each province (approximately) with birth and death rate *per mille*, together with the yearly increase or decrease, that for the previous year being also given. I may mention that out of the seventeen provinces only three have shown a decrease for 1887, while for 1886 every province but one (Naitasiri) showed a decrease.

“Table D is an extension of table A, and shows the percentage of deaths in the ‘Age Periods’ given in the return.

“(1) There are 618 deaths recorded of children under the age of one month, which represents 15·52 *per centum* of deaths.

“(2) No less than 874 died between the ages of one month and one year, representing 21·93 per cent. Therefore the percentage of those who died at twelve months or under is 37·45. The number of children who died between those ages in 1886 was 1,844, and in 1885 was 1,811, while for the year under review it was, 1,492; a considerable improvement, although the percentage is nearly the same as it was in the two preceding years.

“(3) Those over a year but under ten years of age represent 13·36 per cent. of deaths, the number recorded being 462. The figures for 1886 were 611. The total death-rate for children up to ten years of age is 50·71 *per centum*.

“(4) Of ‘Youths’ 331 deaths are recorded, or 8·31 *per centum*. The number for 1886 was 451 or 9·12 *per centum*, and for 1885 it was 377 or 7·63 per cent.

“(5) Under the head of ‘Adults’ 789 deaths are recorded, representing 19·82 *per centum* of deaths, as against 954 or 19·41 *per centum* for 1886 and 968 or 19·59 for 1885. A very considerable improvement.

“(6) Under the head of ‘Aged’ there are 836 deaths recorded, representing 21 *per centum*. This also shows a great improvement, as the number of deaths for 1886 under this head was 1,082 and the year previous it was 1,141.

“Table E shows the proportion *per centum* of different classes of disease. A very large number of deaths will be found registered under the head of ‘Abdomen,’ but, as has been reported in previous years, this table cannot be relied upon in all particulars, and more especially under that head. The ‘Head’ disease column has the next largest percentage, 10·75 against 10·61 for 1886, and 9·69 for 1885. The proportion of sudden and violent deaths is about the same as usual.

“Table F shows the relative position of provinces according to their ratio of increase or decrease. Yasawa heads the list with an increase of 61, or 20·25 *per mille*, while Bua has the largest decrease, viz., 38 or 6·09 *per mille*.”

The

The greatest mortality among the native population, it will be observed, is in respect of children under one year of age, and is estimated at over 37 *per centum* of the total *deaths*, of whom over 15 *per centum* die within one month after birth.

The following analysis of district returns, prepared for the period of $6\frac{3}{4}$ years ending 31st December, 1887, is instructive :—

Deaths under one year of age per 100 *births* :—

Province.	For the period of $6\frac{3}{4}$ years ending 31st December, 1887.			
1. Lomaiviti	28·77
2. Colo East	31·53
3. Cakaudrove	31·70
4. Lau	33·78
5. Rewa	34·18
6. Ba	35·38
7. Kadavu	37·57
8. Yasawa	38·97
9. Namosi	40·21
10. Bua	45·17
11. Macuata	46·19
12. Nadroga	48·10
13. Colo West	52·55
14. Ra	54·07
15. Tailevu	56·75
16. Serua	58·09
17. Naitasiri	59·09
Average for the Colony	44·00

The mean rate in England for the past ten years has been 14·40.

It would therefore appear that the decrease of the native population is due to the phenomenal rate of mortality among infants, and the questions arise—

- (1) What are the predisposing causes of this mortality ? and
- (2) What remedies are practicable ?

These questions, as it is perhaps unnecessary to observe, have occupied the close attention of the Colonial Government for some time past, and certain general conclusions have been arrived at. It appears desirable, however, to elicit opinion on the subject from persons unconnected with the Government, and this is the immediate object of this Circular.

The Governor does not doubt but that the general question of native mortality has already been under your consideration ; and His Excellency feels that you will not hesitate in furnishing him at your early convenience with your opinion and recommendations, which, having regard to your long residence in the country and intimate knowledge of native life and character, could not be otherwise than of great value.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES STEWART,

Assistant Colonial Secretary.

APPENDIX IV.

REPLIES to the Circular Letter of 30th December, 1891, addressed by the Colonial Secretary to Colonists, inviting an expression of their opinion on the causes of the Decrease of the Native Population; including the Twelfth Annual Report on the Vital Statistics of the Native Population, &c.

1893.

COLONY OF FIJI.

DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.

REPLIES to the Circular Letter of 30th December, 1891, addressed by the Colonial Secretary to Colonists, inviting an expression of their opinion on the causes of the Decrease of the Native Population; including the Twelfth Annual Report of the Vital Statistics of the Native Population, and Minute thereon.

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DECREASE OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.

No. 1.

Henry Landseer Tripp, Esq., Planter, Rewa, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Rewa, 30 January, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. $\frac{247}{1802}$, requesting me to give my views respecting the Decrease in the Native Population, and I have much pleasure in complying therewith.

I will briefly give what I consider some of the causes of the said decrease.

1. The exposure of the women at all times and seasons to the influence of the weather for the purpose of fishing, &c. Many of the small children accompany their mothers to the fishing-grounds, and are left under bushes or running about, exposed to the heat or cold.

I would here mention, that before the advent of civilisation the women were unable to take their children outside their towns on their fishing and other excursions, as they had to be prepared for a race home in the event of an enemy appearing, therefore their children remained in the towns with the old people.

I have repeatedly seen women exposed in the most severe weather in their wet clothes, their teeth chattering and their faces dusky white with cold (some of them about to become mothers). They often remain in their wet clothes until they dry on their bodies.

It may be noted that fishing, as practised by the Fijian woman, is most successful when carried on in stormy weather, as the fish then approach the shore.

2. That no restraint is placed on the Fijian children who are allowed to eat and drink at will; and, as suitable food is not always provided, anything is taken to appease their appetites.

The mother, being often absent fishing or otherwise employed, cannot supply the smaller children with their natural nourishment, and when it is supplied it is, from the state of the mother's blood, not in the best condition to give strength to the child.

Fijian women work hard. They have to fish; carry firewood, water, and food from the plantations; cook; weed gardens; prepare material and make mats, nets, tapa, and pottery; and have many other tasks to perform which, when completed, leaves them little time or inclination to attend to their offspring.

They work up to the day of the birth of a child, and often commence again the same day or the day after.

The same conditions may apply to Tonga and Samoa with the same effect, as the women remain in the water, fishing, &c., in all sorts of weather, although they do little other outside work.

3. The practice of abortion and the taking of native medicines to prevent conception may be mentioned as contributing to the decrease.

4. The comparative scarcity of native food from various causes no doubt conduces to an unhealthy condition in both parents and children in some districts.

I consider the foregoing reasons may be taken as the principal causes of the decrease of the native races. It may be said that this state of things has been going on for ages, and no doubt it has; but in the days before the natives wore sulus, I am inclined to think they left their likus on shore when they went fishing, and had no clinging garments to give them colds, and, as I have before said, their children were mostly left in the towns.

Natives are careless in sanitary matters.

It is well known that a native will cover up with a blanket until hot, and then throw it off and sit in a draught until cold.

I found, when attending to the natives during the epidemic of measles in 1875, that when in a state of fever they would lie in water or damp places for hours, and this in spite of strict orders to the contrary; the results being nearly always fatal.

In answer to the second query,—What remedies are practicable? I would beg to suggest:—

1. and 2.—That as it is, of course, impossible, with such a conservative people, to interfere with their fishing or other employment of the women known as women's-work, instructions should be given that women who are about to bear children, or who have young children, should not be so employed.

That no young children are to be taken to the fishing-grounds.

That a house to be called the children's house be set apart in the towns, in which mothers could leave their young children in charge of a woman appointed for the purpose, who could be paid by contributions of food, &c., through the chief of the town.

That parents not taking proper care of their children be punished.

That a special inquiry be made into the cause of death of any child by the chief of the town, Buli, or Native Magistrate; and, if necessary, the parents be brought before the Provincial Court.

That parents be required by Regulation to provide suitable food for their children; and not as at present in some cases require them to climb for vutu nuts, dig for roots, or fish, for a meal before they get it.

That the laws relating to the planting, &c., of gardens be strictly enforced. There is a growing tendency now amongst Fijians to trust too much to chance, and to plant less food than formerly.

That the laws relating to the building of houses and sanitary condition of towns be carried out.

3. With respect to the practice of abortion, &c., little can be done, excepting by the natives themselves. A reward might be offered to informers to be paid after the conviction of an offender.

With reference to the death of adults.—From what I have seen, I think that many children who struggle to maturity have no stamina, and a slight cold or other sickness will carry off an apparently healthy adult, whose weak constitution was brought about by the unwise treatment of his parents during infancy. The Fijians, as a race, are not cruel to their children, but they are very careless and allow them too much freedom.

I shall at all times be glad to assist the Government in any scheme for the improvement of the condition of the native races.

I have, &c.,
H. LANDSEER TRIPP.

No. 2.

Robert Moody Wilson, Esq., Inspector of Native Taxes, Rewa, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Lower Rewa River, 3 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated December 30th, 1891, in which I am requested to give my views upon the subject of the Decrease among the aboriginal Native Population of this group.

During my official sojourn among these natives I have attended their Provincial Councils, at which the subject of their decrease has nearly always been brought forward; in fact, I do not recollect one single occasion upon which this subject has not been discussed. I have frequently known the sites of villages to have been removed to more healthy localities, and I have heard many plans suggested by the natives in council assembled to stay their decrease in number; but, painful to say, such decrease—according to district reports brought forward at the last Tailevu Provincial Council, held at Nausori in January—was greater during 1891 than it had been for many previous years. That the decrease in the native population of Fiji may be attributed to the unhealthy situation of their villages is a very old, and often discussed theory; but such theory will, in my opinion, not hold good in the majority of cases as, for example, I will take the Nasavusavu villages, Nukubalavu, Naicekoro, and Naidi, all of which villages are situated on exceptionally healthy sites; and, when I first knew them—in the year 1864—they were populous native settlements. When on leave of absence, about eight months ago, I again visited these villages, and all I could see were a few houses, a few old men and woman, and a very few children; in fact, I may say—the last remains of the Nasavusavu families.

It appears, from the returns embodied in your letter, that the great decrease in the native population is owing to children dying under the age of one year. Now, I do not recollect having heard the natives at their councils discussing the treatment of their very young children, although this is a subject which requires a great deal of their most earnest consideration. At the Tailevu Council, recently held at Nausori, it was reported that a great number of infants had died since April, 1891, but there, the matter—so far as the infants were concerned—was dropped. Any one who has lived but a few months in these islands is aware of how a native child is treated in its very early infancy. Immediately after its birth it is smeared over with turmeric, wrapped in tappa or rags, and kept there for some time, during which it and its mother not infrequently become covered with vermin: and so six months are allowed to pass away, and the child arrives at one of the most critical periods of its existence, namely,—that of its teething; during which time its mother never thinks of giving it any nourishing food—such as arrowroot, goat or cow's milk, &c., &c.—but keeps her infant wholly dependent upon her breast for sustenance; while she herself lives, in many cases, on a cold vegetable diet, beyond, perhaps, one hot meal per day. When the child is cutting its teeth it may get convulsions or diarrhoea—in either of which cases it is left to Nature. A Fijian mother never thinks of a warm bath or any medicine beyond, perhaps, some simple known to her mother or an old female relative. There must have been a time when the Fijian race increased under worse conditions than are herein written. But assuming that such conditions, under altered circumstances, are among the causes of the decrease in the native population, we arrive at the second question in your letter, namely,—What remedies are practicable? Here I almost feel inclined to say as the Rev. Lorimer Fison said on the causes of the decrease—"for my own part I do not know where to find them,"—the remedies—as when Nature ceases to dictate to the mothers of a race how to treat their children, what can advice or legislation do; more especially when such advice or legislation may possibly clash with the ancient prejudices of the race which it is intended to benefit?

Some years ago certain districts were to purchase cattle in order to secure milk for the children, but the movement ended in talk. Even had the cattle been purchased, the cows in all likelihood would not have been milked, but would ere now have been killed for "magiti."

The Indian women are a dirty degraded lot, yet their children appear to thrive and increase in number, but they are fed upon flour, rice, goat's or cow's milk, and similar nourishing food, as are also their mothers.

I do not think it would be good advice to offer Fijians, to purchase cattle which, if I may use the expression, are too cumbersome, and for which fencing would be required; but I am of opinion that every mataqali should own a herd of goats, which are easily managed, and further that the native mothers should feed their children on arrowroot instead of, perhaps, chewed yam or dalo.

A few weeks ago a native was dying at Tokatoka, where the natives could not find a little arrowroot upon which to keep up his fast failing strength.

Trusting that my foregoing observations may be of some little use.

I have, &c.,
R. M. WILSON.

No. 3.

Nathaniel Chalmers, Esq. (now Acting Stipendiary Magistrate, Savusavu), to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva, 8 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular letter, of number and date as per margin, requesting my co-operation and expression of opinion on the best means of arresting the decay of the native race of this Colony; and, in reply, have now to submit my views and suggestions on this most important subject.

30/12/91,
246
1892.

The birth-rate appears to me to compare very favourably with that of the Australasian Colonies, which for 1890 was 35·08, exceeds England and Wales (32·0), and Ireland (23·4), and is considerably above the mean of other British possessions, which show, from 1882-90, 34·215, or, leaving out Hongkong and Sierra Leone, 36·37. But the enormous mortality of infants under 1 year of life, which even in Lomaviti (28·77), is double that of England, shows very clearly that some grave influences are at work which, with modern skill and science, and an excellent knowledge of the native race, possessed as it is by those in authority, commonly with many others who are old residents in the group, should be successfully combated, and if not altogether extirpated should at least succeed in very materially modifying the evil.

I attribute much of the infantile mortality to three causes, and the general decay of the whole race—as a race—to one cause alone, the former being involved with and included in the latter, of which I must first speak. This cause is, in my opinion, the abolition of polygamy on the introduction of Christianity.

That the race was diminishing seriously before its introduction seems generally admitted. This, however, to a great extent may have been influenced by two potent factors:—(1st) The sanguinary inter-tribal wars and attendant cannibalism; and (2nd) The destroying of female children as useless incumbrances, and as not increasing the fighting power of the tribe. But upon the introduction of Christianity, and the gradual cessation of these depopulating wars, the race should have increased with the increased safety; but the earlier missionaries, whose influence, and indeed that of those succeeding them, was almost, if not quite, paramount, made it a *sine quâ non* for the interesting “convert” that the polygamous state should be abandoned, and the one-man one-wife theory and practice obtain for the future. Their whole being (that of the missionaries) pervaded by this monomaniacal idea—feeling that without the sacrifice of polygamy the whole superstructure which they were busy in rearing would have but an unsubstantial base, they insisted contrary to all rule and practice, human and divine, that monogamy must be the be-all and end-all of their “converted” brethren—and so in my opinion laid the foundation of the rapid decay of the race, on a basis far more fixed, enduring, and unalterable than that of the religion they professed and taught. Doubtless, modern civilisation has by common consent practically abolished polygamy for practical and substantial reasons, but history, past and present, shows unmistakably, I submit, that Christianity pure and simple taught to any race, without interfering with their domestic relations has had better results in every way. The Zulus, among whose tribes Christianity was long ago introduced, do not by any means decrease—their numbers are rapidly on the increase—and so long as their habits of life are untouched they will continue so to progress in numbers. Java has increased her population from five millions in 1805 to over twenty in 1885: the Dutch Reformed Church has its converts, but it does not insist on the monogamous view of the question. In India the population rapidly increases, with the same doctrine of non-interference. If it were possible, which I am afraid it is not, I would gladly see the old system re-introduced spite of the howls of the “unco guid” at such an enormity.

The infant mortality is indirectly traceable to the monogamous life. Fifty years ago a man, in addition to his duties as one of the warriors of his tribe, had, as now, his food to plant for himself and his family, his quota for solevus and magitis—he was far more industrious in that respect than now. If he had more mouths to provide for, he was himself better looked after by the women of his household. A woman bearing a child in every four years was the rule—any lesser interval was looked upon as a disgrace; she, in her turn, was well looked after when her child was born, by the other women—not allowed out for at least a month—and, beyond nursing the infant, relieved of all domestic duties—thus enabled to rear a healthy and strong child to add to the tribal numbers.

Contrast the family life then with that now. The husband has fewer wives to feed it is true—less to provide for magitis and solevus—but he has grown more indolent; his one wife bears children more often, she is only *one* to see to her husband's food, mats, &c., has to do more fishing (which is a most body-killing practice as they follow it), bears, as I said, children more frequently, is weaker herself by consequence—the drain upon her system is greater—and her child suffers in consequence: neglected, and often badly-nourished, it dies.

The tax upon the husband for the “native garden” is not, in my opinion, an exaction worth mentioning, if the European Inspector is enabled to allot the various mataqalis a fair share of the work; but, as at present carried out, much time is lost from the distance to be travelled in many instances: but it is not worth considering on this question.

The next and, in my opinion, the most serious of all the causes, is the totally insufficient supply of native food in quantity and variety. The marked difference in appearance—physically—between the higher classes of the natives and the ordinary run, shows very clearly the advantages accruing from a greater abundance and choice of food, better houses and house comforts; these also indirectly influence the brain-power and consequent intellectual superiority of the chiefs and their families. With similar conditions affecting the bulk of the people, there is no reason why all should not be fairly equal in health and general appearance. The rules or laws passed by the Native Regulation Board as regards food-planting, sautation, &c., are amply sufficient if, in place of being an *effete*, they were a *living* force throughout the land. Were these laws enforced rigidly and conscientiously one great step in advance would

would have been taken. The abundance of food and its variety would render the rearing of young children more easy and more certain. It is to the early care and nourishment of the young that we must look if we wish to preserve the race, and without it all efforts will be in vain. See that, from the Roko downwards, every official in his degree is responsible for an abundant food-supply, and that the old "moka" fish-fences are renewed as well as the ordinary shifting ones, that the old custom of careful tendance of mother and newly-born infant is revived, and a step in the right direction will be taken.

Want of medical attendance, especially on the young, is a grave matter. Much has been done within the last few years in training native practitioners; but every few miles there should be one of these—skilled if only in the ailments of infants and the young. From personal observation I know that scores die from "macake" or thrush, easily cured, but fatal in a very short time without remedial measures. I submit that many might be trained only for this and other ailments of the young and vaccination, eventually succeeded by those with more extended training. And moreover a small tax *per caput* of the mataqali should be secured to the native doctor, whose billet is by no means, or would be, a sinecure.

Lastly.—The severity of the laws against illicit intercourse needs relaxing. So long as there are men and women, so long will such intercourse exist. More encouragement should be given to earlier marriages, and less of the old custom of marrying young women to elderly men be allowed. Undoubtedly the power of the parent over the grown-up daughter is too great now, considering the modifications now going on in the race. I would only punish severely rape and intercourse with girls of any age under 13 or 14. The necessity for concealment on the part of the female when she becomes pregnant leads to the procuring abortion, which, in addition to the killing of the unborn child, injures the female in most cases to such an extent as to prohibit fertility in the future. The professional procurer of abortion should be imprisoned for life.

I have omitted, in mentioning the food-supply, that the indiscriminate and reckless sale of yams should be sternly suppressed. The "veiqatia" of a mataqali, or the lala of the chief of the district, to procure a larger cutter than the adjoining neighbours, leads to much of this, and might, I think, be stopped without very great trouble.

I have thus given my views and suggested alterations, but am greatly afraid that very little can be eliminated that can be of much practical service; that the race is decaying without special epidemics, with no means of drinking intoxicating liquors, with no syphilis such as swept off thousands of Hawaiians, there can be no doubt. I am not one of those who think that it is a law of Nature that the black races must perforce pale before civilisation; and believe, moreover, that good sanitation, abundant food, and a moderately skilled native medical staff, may possibly arrest, if they cannot entirely stop, the disappearance of a fine able-bodied race of men, who, in great numbers, not many years since tilled the soil with skill and success, but are now fast losing their old habits of industry, and becoming less and less able to stem the tide of decay which has set in against them.

I have, &c.,

NATHANIEL CHALMERS.

No. 4.

The Honourable Walter Sinclair Carew, Esq., Resident Commissioner of Colo East, Stipendiary Magistrate of Rewa, &c., &c., to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

11 February, 1892.

I approach this subject with diffidence, though I have for many years given much attention to it.

During the latter part of the last, or the beginning of the present century, Fiji was visited by an appalling epidemic known as "Lila," which means "wasting away of the body," and which, from native accounts, must have swept off many thousands. The symptoms were extreme weakness, diarrhœa or dysentery and general atrophy, ending in death after a lapse of a few days, or in some cases several weeks.

About ten years ago when, in company with Mr. Staff-Surveyor Moore, engaged in cutting the lower boundary-line of Nausori plantation, when passing through a wood on a range, where the Company's manager's house is now situated, we came across many small clay native water-pots. The Buli who was with us expressed great interest, and at once declared they were the relics of the "lila"; it having been the custom when the victims became helpless, hence obnoxious, to remove them on to this low range and leave them to die, with a pot of water and a cooked yam or taro.

The Buli was at this time about 50 years of age. I believe the population had gone on increasing up to the advent of "lila," and that it commenced decreasing from then. The natives have always insisted that "lila" and dysentery and bad forms of diarrhœa were coeval with the arrival of the white man, and always believed dysentery to be highly contagious. At a time when I believed otherwise, I have often attempted to rebut that opinion but never succeeded. They insisted that if one of their number got it, it went more or less through the whole village.

The native children die of diarrhœa and dysentery. When a child is attacked the parents can do nothing for it; if it lives it has been rescued by the *vis medicatrix nature*; that is to say, it lived because the child's body and constitution were stronger than the form of disease attacking it.

I imagine the proportion of deaths amongst white infants would be as heavy were they allowed to take their chance of life or death as native children are. The lives of many white children are saved by a hot bath alone. No native woman would dream of such a remedy—neither has she the appliances, simple as they would appear to be.

A Fijian child has diarrhœa or dysentery, the mother does nothing (the best thing perhaps under the

the circumstances surrounding her), she offers it the breast and places it under a cover from flies and mosquitoes.

I do not believe there is any practicable remedy. The native women are not good mothers, and regard the children as being more their father's offspring than their own. They belong to the father's family and not to the mother's side of the house, excepting along the north side of Vanualevu and, perhaps, Yasawa, where the rule is reversed. The women are not unkind to their infants, but seem deficient in those instincts which should tell a woman that her child is ill, and which suggest a remedy or relief of some kind. A native medical practitioner in every village would do more harm among infants than good, for it is not so much that medicine is required as the hundred little attentions a sensible and affectionate woman, at all seasons, pays to her child. I have lived a good deal amongst natives during the past twenty-three years, and have never seen any particular affection shown to a child by its mother, and have never noticed any demonstration proceeding from either side.

It would appear that the women are a race of blunted sensibilities, they do not know how to preserve their infants, neither would they submit to be taught, even were it a subject which could be taught, which I doubt. All women ridicule the idea that any one can teach them anything regarding the management of their children.

It is my opinion that diarrhœa and dysentery are responsible for the decrease of the population by destroying the infants especially, and that the latter, at any rate, was introduced by the whites, perhaps by the first man reaching the group.

The only way to maintain a population would be by introducing a few thousand low-caste women from the hill countries of India, who might intermarry with the men. These women know how to care for children, and would preserve them under such favourable conditions as exist in this Colony.

I have, &c.,

W. S. CAREW.

No. 5.

Alexander Amos, Esq., Planter, Waimanu, Rewa, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Waimanu, Rewa, 12 February, 1892.

I very much regret my inability to render His Excellency the Governor such information as may in any way tend to account for the deplorable fact that the native population is gradually but surely decreasing.

Still, I may mention that, after a residence of some twenty-four years in Fiji, I may venture to offer a few opinions of my own.

I entirely concur with the Rev. Mr. Langham, that the decay of the native race preceded the advent of white settlers here, as witness the many old town sites to be now seen on any and every plantation on the Rewa River, evidencing the dense population that must at one time have dwelt here.

That alcohol has in the remotest degree anything to do with the death-rate is simply absurd.

Death-rate amongst children up to 1 year of age:—

I have long considered this to be one of the most serious causes of the decay, and attributable to—

1. *Want of care and forethought on the part of the mother before birth of child.*—Mothers far gone in pregnancy, are daily seen carrying heavy loads in all weathers, kai-fishing from morn' till night, working in plantations, and doing other labour for which they are at the time most unfitted, and which must indirectly weaken the unborn child. Medical testimony may ridicule this; I, however, uphold it.

2. *Carelessness and ignorance after birth of offspring, especially during the process of dentition.*—I know from experience the difficulty during this trying time with children, and the many ills arising from want of knowledge—very simple, but most indispensable—in such cases. There may arise another trouble—the mother may not be able to supply her infant with sufficient nourishment, and has not the knowledge, and perhaps not the means, to increase the deficiency, or her milk may not agree with the child, causing internal disorders, which, without immediate remedy, may prove fatal.

The remedy is, I am afraid, a hopeless one; but may be found in:—

The amelioration in the life and condition of the Fijian woman.

More efficient medical supervision of the different districts under trained native doctors; and last, but not least, "midwives and nurses."

That 15 per cent. of native children die within one month after birth, such knowledge should give our medical officers a clue to the mystery, and partly bears out my own opinion.

How does this death-rate compare with European children in Fiji?

In conclusion I may add that large families amongst the natives are very rare; and it is an open question whether malpractice is carried on to prevent child-bearing or not.

I have, &c.,

ALEX. AMOS.

No. 6.

Georgé Rodney Burt, Esq., Dulewalu, Serua, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Dulewalu, 12 February, 1892.

In compliance with your request, I append herewith a few remarks *re* "The Decrease of the Native Population of this Colony." Regarding the decrease before Annexation, I differ with Mr. Fison, and

and am of opinion that polygamy was the cause—or rather the results of polygamy—for abortion was commonly practised. The men slept in bures, and the chiefs had free access to any or all of the women; and to remain as favourites of the chiefs they were most anxious to retain their youthful appearance, and thought that the bearing of children was detrimental to this.

Of late years, the sudden changes and exposure have much to do with it. In their houses and towns they dress themselves up in shirts, coats, and singlets, &c., and the women in pinafores; and then, when they go out to their gardens or fishing, they throw these off, and are exposed to the changes of weather. Frequently the women come to my house, to beg for a little fire, shivering and shaking with cold, and wearing only their grass librus. They are much subject to low fevers; and on the approach of any sickness the first thing they do is to cast off their clothing. The women, too, up to the day of childbirth, follow their daily avocations of fishing, carrying heavy loads of firewood, taro, or yams: thus causing premature confinement. (I am aware this statement is in direct contradiction to the glowing description Sir Arthur Gordon gave of the life of the women in Fiji.) But the most potent cause of all, in my opinion, is *tobacco* and *self-abuse* amongst men and women, girls and boys. Again, before Annexation they had better food, and more of it. Under heathen rule every town was a pig-pen—every district a huge taro and yam bed—on every flat and reef was a fish-fence—and every few days a feast had to be made for the chiefs and people.—Now their principal food is *tobacco* and *bananas*.

I have, &c.,

G. RODNEY BURT.

No. 7.

John K. M. Ross, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate of Lomaiviti, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Stipendiary Magistrate's Office,

Levuka, 18 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 30th December last, No 275, 1892; and, in reply thereto, I respectfully submit the following observations for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor.

2. The Government should continue to direct its efforts towards improved sanitation of the villages, in which regard much requires to be done still.

3. It is a matter for medical opinion whether the propagation of *coko* should not be checked, there being a belief among Fijians that a child should have *coko* almost in the same manner as it is vaccinated.

4. Greater seclusion and isolation of families should be encouraged in the villages, by planting the houses at wider distances apart than is the case at present. There would thus be less inducement for mothers to haunt the houses of other people, and to neglect their children.

5. The evidence at the Royal Commission on Labour showed that the highest rate of infant mortality is in Preston, where the mortality was 22 per cent., and yet this rate is nearly one-half of the average rate of the Colony, and 8·77 per cent. under the lowest rate in the Colony. The cause assigned at the Commission for the high death-rate in factory-towns was the too early withdrawal of maternal care. The suggestion was made that a nursing-mother should not be allowed to work under six months after her confinement. A similar restriction would, I think, be beneficial in Fiji.

6. It is also a matter for medical opinion, whether the practice that prevails, among women of all ages, of spending several hours in the sea, while fishing, does not cause functional disorders. With proper forethought there is no need for these fishing excursions, as the fish-fences, poultry-yards and pig-sties should furnish the natives with an ample supply of nitrogenous food. And here the question may be asked, "Are the Fijians, and more especially the mothers of the race, properly fed"? They are not, as a rule; and this is because they live from hand to mouth in some measure, and rear their live stock in the same fashion. Indians, with the same opportunities as Fijians, would have goats, pigs, and fowls in large numbers, and would plant maize to feed them. They would also have meat probably once a day, and would have an abundance of fresh milk for the young children. Fijians, as a rule, are content with meat not more than once a week at the most, and it is sometimes "preserved"—the natives on rich islands, such as Moturiki, buying preserved meat largely. Occasionally fish is procured from fences, but there is much uncertainty with them. In default of fish from the fences, and meat, the women spend hours in the water fishing with hand-nets; a habit that is probably hurtful, and for which there should be no occasion. I think it may be said with confidence, that Indians would increase rapidly were they under the same conditions as Fijians. Yet, apart from the existence of an unreasoning conservatism, there seems no reason why the latter should not avail themselves of the advantages which are within their reach. There is also the fact that Fijian infants are suckled by their mother long after the period at which a European child would have been weaned, and receive unwholesome food when they are too old to take milk from the breast.

7. There is a gleam of hope so long as the birth-rate remains high among the Fijians, but otherwise the prospects of the future existence of the race are doubtful, the *vis inertiae* of native custom being so strong.

I have, &c.

JOHN K. M. ROSS.

No. 8.

Charles O. Eyre, Esq., Planter, Natuvu, Cakaudrove, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Natuvu, 15 February, 1892.

Your letter of the 30th December, requesting a statement of my views on the Decrease of the Natives of this Colony, only reached me a few days ago, and I have hitherto had no opportunity of forwarding a reply.

In my opinion there are several minor causes at work to expedite the extinction of the Fijian race; but they might not be sufficient in themselves to do so, were there not one major cause present which has existed probably for many generations, certainly long before the advent of Europeans, and which is the chief factor in the decadence of the race. This is, that the race itself—as a race—is wanting in virility, and has not sufficient stamina to enable it to raise a proper and sufficient increase to counteract the natural loss from disease, famine (war in former times), and other calamities.

I believe the Fijians to have sprung from two distinct types of mankind, a negro and an Indian or Malay type.

At first, and as long as immigration was kept up—perhaps for several generations after that ceased—the race was sufficiently strong to assert itself and increase, until a time came when from various causes, topographical and belligerent, the tribes became more and more isolated and contained within themselves, as was the case up to quite a recent date; for from recorded traditions, which may be called history, we know that it is only comparatively lately that there were any large aggregations of tribes under one head, such as Verata, Rewa, Bau, Cakaudrove, etc. And I think it is fair to assume that, prior to this taking place, the tribes were situated very much as is now the case, I believe, in some of the other Pacific Islands. Each tribe was by itself and lived with its hand against all its neighbours and almost entirely shut out from outside influence.

This led to constant intermarriage among the members of a tribe, and indeed among members of a family, as is proved by the relations of one class of cousins to one another, with but very little introduction of fresh blood from other tribes to counteract the destructive tendency a long continued course of interbreeding must result in.

As was to be expected, the virility of the race suffered; and constant wars hastened what inherent weakness had begun. This cause is still in active operation. There is still far too much intermarriage among members of the same tribe and family, and far too small an introduction of new blood to be of much use to rehabilitate the race, though, I believe, there are more marriages contracted with members from other tribes now than was formerly the case.

Were this cause removed, it is a question whether there would still remain sufficient strength in the race to stop on its downwards course and make a start towards recovery.

Among the minor causes that are tending to the decrease of the population, I believe the abolition of polygamy to be one. When polygamy was the custom it was, as a rule, the better class of natives, chiefs, and persons of consequence in the tribe that practised it, to the detriment, it is true, of their less fortunate fellows—but at the same time they were better able to maintain their wives in food and comforts than less important members could maintain their one, and, as was the constant practice all over the group, to allow a mother after the birth of a child from 2 to 3 years in which to nurse the child before she was called upon to bear another. Nowadays many of the women bear children as often as is the case among Europeans; and, having but poor food and insufficient quantities of that, have not sufficient strength to bear the double burden of rearing the children, and at the same time produce others. A very large number of deaths among infants arises from this cause; the mother becomes pregnant while nursing, and instead of at once weaning the child continues to suckle it up to the birth, if the child does not die before (I myself am cognisant of several deaths from this cause); and when it is at last weaned it is so weakly, from the poor quality of the mother's milk, it has not strength to bear the weaning. A great want is suitable food to enable a child to be weaned when necessary.

Again, the food upon which they live does not contain nutriment of a strong enough nature to enable women to constantly bear healthy children. After the birth of one or two they become debilitated; and children born afterwards are weakly and soon die.

Want of attention to the children is another fruitful source of mortality; and the health of a child is often endangered through the selfish desire of the mother to gratify herself with some pleasure, such as a trip by sea or land, or a fishing excursion, taking the child with her no matter what the weather may be or what the state of health of the child.

That there is a strong disinclination among the women to be troubled with the cares of maternity is, I am afraid, a sad, but assured fact.

The difficulties in the way of a couple desiring to get married has also a deterrent effect on the increase of population. Finding so many obstacles in their way through jealousy of relatives, want of a house, or the necessary “yau,” or the consent of the Buli, they come together without marriage and the woman takes native medicine to counteract the probable results.

Insufficiency of food is another important factor; for, in spite of all the Government regulations as to planting, the fact remains that they do not plant enough food (in this district at all events), and were it not for China bananas would absolutely starve, as the cocoanuts are tabu'd for two-thirds of the year. The placing of the tabu upon the nuts for so long a period is, in my opinion, a mistake; they remain on the ground until they *vara*, and by the time the taxes are to be made are almost useless for that purpose; meanwhile the owners are deprived of a healthy and nourishing article of diet of which they are very fond and have been accustomed to use large quantities.

I know that among native labourers when allowed to use as many nuts as they please, they will take them at every meal, eating at least half a nut per man in addition to their rations; and it certainly seems to agree with them.

It

It is perhaps a rash thing to venture to assert in these days, when everything seems tending to some form of communism, but I honestly believe that the communal system in which they live has a great deal to do with their decrease; whether it had any effect that way in former times I could not say—probably not; but the conditions are much changed now—the old relations between chiefs and commoners, and among commoners themselves, are greatly altered.

The chief still expects his dues from the commoners, but fails to make that return which used to be expected and generally given.

That the practice of *lala* and *kerekere* as now carried on is disastrous to the race I am quite convinced. While these practices are continued there is but little hope for their future. Deprived of all incentive to individual exertion and identity they can only sink lower and lower—planting less and less year by year—and becoming possessed of less and less property and comforts. The falling off in the production of food in this district in the time I have lived here (some ten years) is a serious one and increases every year, and the decrease of animals and property is in the same proportion.

Medical attendance:—

If they could procure medical attendance at not too great a distance, they would, I believe, avail themselves of it in many instances; and it would certainly save many lives, especially among children.

Their own practice, though beneficial in some instances, is, I am afraid, more often of a contrary effect. Not knowing what is the real nature of an ailment, they try native medicine after native medicine, in the hopes that one at least may prove the right one; and seldom allow sufficient time to elapse between administering one for it to have any effect before they try some other—seeming to expect that the mere act of swallowing the medicine should effect a cure at once.

I am sure many children are annually killed by this. The large quantities given at a time, and the frequency, upsetting the child's weak stomach and rendering it unable to take any food at all. Might I venture to suggest that a few hints published in the *Na Mata*, or sent to each "Buli," as to the treatment of some of the simple ailments of children, such as are generally consequent on teething, might be beneficial; also that, in districts where there is no available medical advice to be obtained, a supply of simple remedies, with clear instructions as to their use, be placed in the charge of some European resident who would dispense them on application. I myself have often had, to my regret, to refuse medicine when asked for, simply because I had not got it to give.

If they only understood that such a simple thing as hot water was of use in childrens' fevers and ailments they would save many a child that otherwise dies.

It is a great pity that when sick they have no other food to take but what they habitually use, and which when sick they are unable to eat or digest—though I do not see how this could very well be remedied. During this last epidemic of influenza, it was astonishing the number who sent to beg a little rice, or biscuit and tea and sugar, and were able to take these when they turned from their own food with disgust.

In conclusion, I would say that if by any means they could be persuaded to marry more often with members of other districts, to always have a sufficiency of food, to obtain medical aid when necessary, to have the necessity of greater care of the children impressed upon them, encouragement given to individuals to improve their position, and the difficulties in the way of marriage removed, the race might possibly make a start to recover.

I have, &c.,
CHARLES O. EYRE.

No. 9.

Adolph B. Joske, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate and Assistant Resident Commissioner of Colo East, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Colo East, 17 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 30th December ultimo, requesting an expression of my views upon the Decrease of the Native Population.

It is a most difficult matter upon which to reply; it is one that has puzzled savants who have made South Sea ethnology their special study. Nearly seven years ago I read De Quatrefarge's work on the Polynesian race, and it is, in my opinion, the most lucid one on the subject that I have yet come across. In it there is a chapter devoted to the decadence of the race. The edition that I read was some years old. I cannot now remember the date of it, but this impression has been left on my mind—that the decrease of the race was no new matter.

De Quatrefarge's work is solely devoted to the long-straight-haired people of the Eastern Pacific—the Polynesian race *par excellence*. But I think his remarks may be applied to Fiji, as it is the borderland between Melanesia and Polynesia, both types being found here; sometimes in almost their pure states, but as a rule strongly intermixed.

De Quatrefarge mentions, that from the time of the arrival of the earliest navigators in these seas, the natives began to decrease. He propounds many questions as to the reason, such as—Was it the introduction of syphilis? or the despair caused by the superiority of the white man and the hopelessness of natives endeavouring to compete with them? or the introduction of foreign epidemics or what? If I recollect rightly he negatives all these questions. He points out that, as regards Tahiti syphilis was known, and that the native population was at times also swept by epidemics before the arrival of foreigners. He answers the whole matter by stating that he believes that the cause of the decrease was the introduction, by the arrival of foreign ships, of tubercular consumption; and bases his opinion from averages struck from returns of post-mortems made by surgeons in Tahiti and New Zealand.

Is it possible that this reason may be also applicable to Fiji?

However, as regards Fiji in the times that it was a strong and flourishing nation or rather congregation

congregation of tribes, a national sentiment was, I believe, never known. The natives must have lived under a far different state of things to what our first knowledge of them shows to have prevailed; and which, with considerable modifications, exists also at the present time.

At some time or other the race must have increased and multiplied in Vitilevu. Native tradition asserts that the race gradually spread over from the north-western part of the island, and finding the central and southern parts unoccupied they gradually settled and multiplied and spread over those parts. This is in a manner corroborated by the fact that the names of the different principal tribes of central and southern Vitilevu are found commencing in the Yasawa Group off the north-western coast, and, spreading over to the mainland, go gradually on till they reach their present resting-places on the southern coast and central regions.

Native tradition also seems to point out that before the arrival of white strangers occasional epidemics occurred, and the race when flourishing must have been sufficiently robust to supply the waste caused by them.

But the conditions under which the Fijians were a flourishing and increasing race were unknown at the time of the arrival of the first whites.

Our history of them discloses a state of things amongst the comparatively large maritime governments under which no nation could have increased. It is quite possible, however, that the Fijians in the mountains of Vitilevu even flourished and increased then. Nothing whatever was then known of the interior of that island, and our subsequent knowledge of them has shown that they had not reached the depths of degradation and demoralisation that the coast tribes had. With the latter all power had lapsed into the hands of certain chiefs, who were absolute despots, their despotism being not infrequently tempered by the assassination that is usual in such cases. The mountaineers were independent and existed as petty republican communities perpetually at war with each other.

Although Waterhouse in his very interesting book, "The King and People of Fiji," speaks about the state of Rewa and Verata in the seventeenth century, and gives a short history of Bau from the time shortly prior to their leaving the mainland at the close of the eighteenth century, I look upon it all as mere constructive history compiled from untrustworthy myths. Real authentic history of Fiji does not, I consider, commence until the arrival of the first Wesleyan missionaries in 1836.

We then find a state of things existing under which no race could expect to survive. The chiefs monopolised the greater part of the women. They made matrimonial alliances with their powerful neighbours in order that the offspring of such marriages should be *vasu's* to their mother's tribes, and thus able to seize and appropriate to their own use all property they desired belonging to their maternal relations. To counterbalance this state of things as far as possible, ladies of rank brought in the retinue from their native places practitioners skilled in procuring abortion, who had secret instructions to prevent as far as possible the birth of *vasu's* and the consequent detriment of their own particular tribe. Not only did the chiefs have many political wives, but they also seized every good-looking girl they possibly could. These after a time would be tired of and neglected. Should any of these girls have a lover it was death to both should the matter be discovered. Nevertheless constant intrigues went on in the harems of the chiefs. Usually, however, owing to the want of privacy in Fijian village life, such affairs were generally discovered and resulted in the deaths of the offending parties, and was a very fruitful cause of the depletion of the race in those days.

The *kaisi's* or slaves were never allowed to have wives; and, to quote Macaulay, were "shut out from the pleasures of love and the hope of posterity." However, sometimes by the special favour of their chiefs they were allowed the use of cast-off mistresses.

Amongst the middle classes who could manage to secure wives, a custom and belief existed which prevails at the present day. That is, that if a child is to grow up well and strong there must be no sexual intercourse between the parents until the child has reached the age of five and six. It is supposed not to be weaned until then. The effect on the child of premature sexual intercourse is that it sickens and dies. Its death is then said to be caused by *dabe*, which I notice on page 32 of Vital Statistics of the Native Population for 1887, at paragraph 55, is quoted as being one of the great causes of the infantile death-rate.

Considering the strong animal passions of the average male this custom may perhaps be considered to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance. But this was not so, neither is it so now. The one strong deep-rooted belief of the average Fijian is the worship of his ancestors, which Christianity has certainly, so far as the district in which I live is concerned, failed to obliterate. The average Fijian believes that his deceased ancestors watch over and protect him in this life as long as he duly performs all the obligations of family life; and in the hereafter will welcome him in Burotu, the Fijian paradise. The chief obligation imposed upon him is to leave descendants to perpetuate the family name, and to worship and serve the departed. The man who fails to do so will surely in the next world receive dreadful punishment. Thus it is that a man who has got a child is seldom himself guilty of causing *dabe*. It is generally caused by the meeting of unprincipled men with other peoples' wives, who are unable when opportunity arises to resist importunity. Such at least has been my experience as a magistrate.

Amongst the more enlightened the belief in *dabe* is dying out; but to the average Fijian it is still extant, and 50 or 60 years ago it must have been still more so. Thus in 20 years a woman, who strictly adhered to this rule, would not have more than four children. The probability is, I think, that owing to the hard life of toil led by ordinary Fijian women, they do not remain fruitful for 20 years. To multiply the human race, parents must produce more than two children, or they only replace themselves. I, therefore, think that we may safely contend that from the time from which our authentic history of Fiji commences, that owing to the polygamy of the higher chiefs, and the consequent deprivation of marital rights to the commoners, the belief in *dabe* and the constant intertribal wars, and general disregard to human life, the natives never were multiplying.

Of course, the main question raised by your circular is that "it would appear that the Decrease of the Native Population is due to the phenomenal rate of mortality amongst infants." Now the causes

causes of this, which I propose to discuss presently, existed in a far greater degree in the old heathen times; and I think that could we get statistics of those times, *i.e.*, from the beginning of our authentic knowledge of Fijian history, we should find that the infant mortality was even far greater than it is now, and that if anything the advent of settled government has in a measure checked it. What I want to show is that the Fijians must have lived under a totally different phase of existence when they were a multiplying and increasing race to that which at any time we have known them to be under.

In my opinion the great mortality amongst Fijian infants is caused by the total disregard of all sanitary and hygienic principles by their guardians and parents. The children are born in houses rendered stiflingly hot by tremendous fires. They are taken outside indiscriminately into the open air, whereby chills are caused. Fijian houses, owing to the neutral tints and picturesque materials of which they are composed, if at all new look rather neat and clean. But they are in reality whited sepulchres, full of all sorts of abominations. The mats look nice and clean, but every one of the inmates, when they spit, lift the corners of the mats and spit under them. They blow their noses with their fingers, which they wipe on the sides of the houses. I have read that such refuse mucous matter breeds disease; and it is alleged that American railway carriages are rendered unhealthy by the profuse expectoration which is the habit of that country, whereby are bred the bacilli of phthisis and other lung diseases.

The greater part of the children, however, die from abdominal diseases, caused probably by insufficient nutriment and bad water, especially the latter. In the mountainous part of my district, where the finest water possible is procurable, I find that its good qualities are generally nullified by being kept in dirty vessels, which are never properly washed or purified. When one asks for water up there, one generally finds what is offered full of grits, grains of sand, chips, and other rubbish.

In Lomai Colo it is the custom for the women to do no work for the first month after their confinement, and they are supplied with the *ba* or stalks of the *dalo*, which are considered to be extremely nutritious. After the month they go to work again, when sometimes the baby is left at home all day in charge of the father, who is expected to take his share of the nursing, when, of course, it is not suckled; or the mother takes it out into the fields, regardless of weather.

The women work very hard too, and often spend hours in the water fishing, which probably has a detrimental effect on their milk supply.

The children, too, as soon as they can crawl about are allowed to do pretty well as they like, and to gnaw and eat anything they come across. Such a thing as discipline among Fijian children is an unknown factor.

In discussing remedies, I should like first of all to at once dismiss what is a popular remedy with inconsiderate and casual observers, who recommend the resumption of polygamy as their panacea against the peculiar habit of non-sexual intercourse until the children are well grown. The relative proportions of the sexes do not permit of it, as the males greatly exceed the females.

It has been suggested by some that the natives should be supplied with cows and goats. My own opinion is, that first of all they must be taught cleanliness, or else a great deal more infant sickness will result from milk-poisoning. I have known natives to be given milk for their sick by white settlers. In such cases they generally allowed the utensils they got the milk in to get into the most filthy condition, and when remonstrated with and shown that they should cleanse the utensils with hot water, rather than go to that trouble, they refused to come again for the milk.

Natives that have cows won't even go to the trouble of milking them.

The only remedy that I can think of is to go on inculcating lessons of cleanliness and general hygiene. I know it is very heart-breaking work, but we ought to persevere and not allow ourselves to get careless and disheartened because we do not meet with immediate success. Fijian women are most conservative, and we shall do but little with the present grown up generations; but we ought to try and see what education will do for the rising generation.

I have, &c.,

ADOLPH B. JOSKE.

No. 10.

Frederick Vollmer, Esq., Merchant, Levuka, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Levuka, 25 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Circular letter of 3rd instant, with regard to the Decrease of Native Population, and the request of expressing my personal views in regard to this matter to you.

I must confess that I have never gone into very serious consideration of the matter; though having lived for over 12 years in the country and, through store and plantation work, in daily contact with the natives, I have certainly formed an opinion of my own about the above subject, which I will try to give as short and explicit as possible. Certainly, this is based only on my experience in the district I lived in, *viz.*, Wailevu and neighbourhood, in Savusavu Bay.

It is my opinion, firstly, that the coloured races in these islands are doomed—same as all over the globe—that the coloured races are decreasing, and this all the faster as they come in contact with white-men—and that no Government nor philanthropic measures or precautions can stop this. They may defer the decrease, by stopping warfare and preventing the supply of alcoholic drinks to natives, but never will stop it.

This decrease may have gone on for centuries already before the islands were discovered, as nobody could tell such a fact, but since their discovery only it has come under the notice of the whites.

Secondly

Secondly, this decrease is attributable, in my opinion, to the circumstances of the natives being too indolent and lazy, too irregular in the ways of living, and most of all too immoral, and unknown of such noble virtues as love, honour, ambition, &c.

Indolent and lazy they are, as Nature provides them with everything they require—if it comes very hard even, without any work at all—in the shape of food and raiment. This again makes them irregular in their ways of living. Like children they only think of the moment, never of to-morrow or the future. They will, therefore, waste their all, to-day, for a feast, only to see large piles of stuff and to be able to boast about the quantity, and go on half-starvation rates for weeks or perhaps months to follow. They will waste days, perhaps weeks, in a feast and the preparations for one, dance whole nights through, and thus be unfit and disinclined to work in daytime.

Too immoral they are, partly through the climate, partly as a consequence of their forenamed qualities, and partly from old heathen times when they lived like animals and did not know better; for up to the present day they are not much better; and all their Christianity is only a very superficial outward coating. And of such nobler virtues as love, honour, pride, ambition, &c., as esteemed by us, there is almost nothing to be found amongst them.

These observations I have made times out of number during my sojourn in the country. The immorality is simply disgusting and, with all its consequences, to my mind the greatest factor in the decrease of the population. Two will get married only to get a divorce again after a few months or years; and if they do not go that far, each party will follow its own will and inclination, and children are an unnecessary and troublesome burden in such a case. Children will see such things and take example by them. Besides, having nothing to occupy their minds, they lie about in the houses in the evenings, listening to all the talk openly going on. And this, from the limited scope of the natives' imagination and thoughts, is certainly confined to every day's occurrences, and only too often unfit for children's ears. They themselves will begin much earlier than proper manhood is attained, and thus age before their time and degenerate the race.

The Buli of the district several times asked my opinion about the alarming decrease, and I always gave him this as, in my opinion, the main reason.

Too indolent and lazy because they have no ambition, and to a great extent no chance to improve their condition, this latter, mainly through the unfortunate system of Communism reigning amongst them. As soon as any one would acquire something more, there will at once demand be made on him either by some chief or by relatives. The former he cannot deny for fear of punishment for disobedience, the latter not for old custom and courtesy's sake. They, therefore, do not plant more nowadays than is absolutely necessary; and to think of the future and future generations is a thing they have never learnt. Look out for Number One is their principle.

To provide them now with these higher qualities so highly valued by the white man, as love to their wives and children—the present love being more like animal love only—honour and pride in a straightforward and unstained character and reputation—gaol or disgrace being no shame for them at present—ambition and morality, &c., can only be brought about in my opinion:—

1. By real true religion and proper teaching and explaining of all these qualities.
2. By the strictest education of the children in the way white children are brought up, namely, strict enforcement of school every day, if possible, where the children learn, besides the rough elementary things, honour and ambition in the trial to be best, obedience (a quality very sorely wanted), diligence, and regular work.
3. By providing good reading matter in the shape of fables, good stories, &c., and other little pastime games for children, so as to occupy their minds in the evenings, give them amusement, and distract them from unwholesome conversations of grown-up people.

The grown-up people ought to learn a more regular way of living—regular work, and regular wholesome meals and rest—to take care in case of sickness, and not only to follow their own inclinations. Plantation labourers will, at the end of their 12 months be generally found in a much stronger and healthier condition than at the beginning through their regular work, combined with regular meals and rest. In sickness they are too obstinate, and will try all sorts of native medicines before trying white-man's medicines. I am far from condemning all native medicines—there are many very good ones—but only few know them; and if these are not in reach others will try their hands, and, I dare say, often with fatal results, while in most parts of the group white men are within reach, and generally willing to assist, if only trusted by the natives, even if failing to cure the patient. In sicknesses new to them they are altogether at a loss, but never feel inclined to follow the advice of a white man. How many natives have died during the last influenza epidemic, mostly through bathing while in fever, and this very often just against the advice of the whites—only to follow their own inclination?

Whether, and, how such remedies as proposed could be carried out, I am unable to judge; in fact believe that their proper carrying out would incur too much of an expense. But it is my humble opinion, that by such a bringing up of the children, and consequently by raising to a higher standard of the whole race, the decrease might be stayed, or at least deferred, though it would take several generations to acquire this, while, with the now living grown-up race, nothing, or almost next to nothing, can be done.

I beg to apologise for the length of my expressions.

I have, &c.
F. VOLLMER.

No. 11.

E. R. Ball, Esq., Surveyor, Savusavu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Nasavusavu, 12 February, 1892.

In the year 1881, when the Rev. Lorimer Fison, M.A., wrote the paragraph mentioned in pamphlet, dated December 30th, No. $\frac{2+4}{1891}$, which has just reached me, was he, do you think, aware that it is recorded in a book that I now forget even the name of—but which was once in my possession—that Captain Cook, I think in either 1770 or 1777, stated that the natives of Polynesia were, in his opinion, at that time past their prime; that the signs of decadence were everywhere to be seen to those—to use a Russian proverb—“Who did not walk through a wood and see no firewood.” More than one hundred years afterwards, the same words are used by a Wesleyan missionary who, from his own power of observation and research, came to the same conclusion.

It would therefore appear, at all events at first sight, that the decrease of the native race in this Colony is (to quote a few words from your pamphlet), “not due to any new influence arising out of the establishment of settled authority over the Islands.”

I am not quite sure that this is quite correct, or that such a conclusion is not a little erroneous. As far as Fiji is concerned, I am of opinion, that “the establishment of settled authority” has not been brought about without unfortunate results, which have materially helped the Decrease of the Native Population.

Although I state this because I believe it to be true, I would not have you nor any one believe that the establishment of a settled form of government in these islands has done anything more than, perhaps, inevitably help to swell the 8,948 deaths over births in a single decade, which is made mention of on page 3. The larger question of the period over which the decadence of the native race has been taking place is altogether unaffected by settled authority having been established in these islands.

Whether my opinion on this question be worth anything or not, I give it here. I believe that the Rev. L. Fison is correct in his statement, pages 2-3, and remember perfectly that, in 1881, I was very much surprised to find my own opinion formed—I am afraid from what I had read and not from what I had observed—corroborated by one so well competent to speak on the subject.

Sir, in the social and domestic life of the people, in their terrible carelessness of infant life—in the inability of the native of the Pacific to readily adapt himself to the new circumstances, in which he constantly finds himself, or to fit himself to the changes which are now more than ever necessary for human life on this earth—are, I believe to be found the germs of decay, and the reason of the depopulation of whole islands.

The gross carelessness, or what appears to us so, of native women for the welfare of their children, arises not so much from ignorance of an infant's wants as from—I can put it in no better way—the savage animal nature that will allow her to make no self-sacrifice, not even for her own offspring. With a patience that any white woman might envy, I have seen them watch, when the child's life was past all hope, by the little sufferer's mat, denying herself food while she waits and tends the child, whose life might have been saved, at least, in many instances, if she would only at an earlier period have been content to sit in her house of an evening, instead of in the *rara* of the village gossiping or watching some *meke*, with the cold deadly land-breeze sweeping from the hills falling on—in many cases—the naked body of the child.

Here is an example of what I mean, that I can vouch for. About two weeks before the influenza visited us, towards the end of last year, while the men from every town in Wailevu district were up at Somosomo, building houses, the women of Natimu came and asked me to let them dig wild yams on the hill at the back of the house. While they waited for my answer, a child, slung on a woman's back, commenced, to my horror, to cough most dreadfully: not a common cough, but whooping-cough. Until I heard that child, I did not know that *vunikuli*, as the natives call it, was going about. The child was young, and evidently very ill, indeed. I asked the mother what she meant by wanting to go and dig yams in the, at that time, cold, and exceedingly wet bush, while her child was so ill; and it was not till I had to make use of threats that she relinquished her desire to go with the other women, and went back to the village with the child. Two days afterwards I heard that it was dead.

During the time that the men of the district were building houses at Somosomo, while every one of the fathers were away, no less than five children died in the small village of Natimu.

Another woman would not give up practising a *meke* at night for the missionary meeting. Her child also died. That death, perhaps, was not preventable; but the others, I think, with common precaution might have been saved—at all events, if not all, some of them. The village has not now one single infant in it.

Another death occurred at Vatukawa last year, which, I cannot help thinking, was attributable to the absence of the husband, though in this case the man himself deserves punishment. Although the natives are as well aware as I am that the magistrate will pass no married men to work for twelve months on white men's plantations, they rush in crowds to Wailevu whenever a labour agent appears, and endeavour to get leave to go. I verily believe that were it not for Government Regulations this district could be easily depopulated of all its able men every year. A sort of mania seems to take possession of the people to get away from their towns and their chiefs.

The man in question, Sekovi, had been married about nine months; his wife was near her confinement when the last lot of labour left here. The magistrate, of course, sent him and a whole lot more back to their villages. Unfortunately the vessel that took the labour away was not large enough to convey them all at one trip, one-half of the men had to walk down to Kubalau and wait the return of the vessel from Bau, where men from here to Nausori are usually landed.

Amongst those who walked down to Kubalau was Sekovi, and, I am told a good few more married men from about Yanawai absconded in the same fashion, and are now working at Rewa without having been

been passed by the magistrate. Be that as it may, Sekovi went. Shortly after his departure his wife gave birth to a child. Of course, some care was taken of her, but I am afraid in the absence of the husband not much; anyhow she appears to have fretted for a few weeks, and then died. The child, thanks entirely to the care of an old woman, stone blind, and no one else, is alive.

I might enumerate many more cases that have come under my own observation, of what, as I said before, appears to us gross carelessness of native women for their children, but shall content myself with just mentioning one common practice in a different part of Fiji. There is, I believe, no part of this group where the land-breeze, so injurious to very young children, blows so keen and so cold, as between Suva Harbour and the Sigatoka River. Many years ago, before Annexation was much thought about, on fine moonlight nights, the women and children, pretty well all along that coast, could be found nearly always of an evening, sitting on the beach gossiping. I have been amazed to see little naked children, some only a few months old, lying sound asleep on little mats on the sand, while the mothers talked and smoked till 10 or 11 o'clock. As you walked along the coast, at each village you came on these groups, laughing, talking, and enjoying themselves, utterly indifferent to the little forms asleep beside them.

I often asked myself the question, even in those unthinking days—What can a native woman do, with her strange social condition and general surroundings with her, as far as I know, almost everlasting toil, to tend an infant as an infant should be tended? This is a very grave question, and one that will, I am sure, tax to the uttermost the wisdom of the executive, or whoever is called upon to answer it.

Without improving in some way the condition of the women, how is any improvement possible? for the preservation of the race from absolute decay depends now on them.

In what I am now going to say I may be wrong; but as you have asked for my views I cannot help stating that I think that too much stress is laid in your pamphlet on infant mortality as affecting the increase or decrease of the native race of this Colony.

If you will take my word for it, as I have not got the papers now to send you, I will show you that, as far as I remember, a larger death-rate than that shown in your paper is by no means incompatible with a very great increase in the population.

A series of clever and really brilliant articles appeared last year in the English *Times* on the Negro question in the United States. Very possibly His Excellency or yourself may have read them; if so, you will doubtless remember that after describing the burning nature of that question, the writer, in dealing exclusively with the negro, showed that, though the death-rate of the race—infants, children, and adults was something enormous, compared with the whites, the fecundity of the race was such that the yearly increase was causing the gravest apprehension in the minds of all thinking men in the States.

Sir, to my mind, we have now got to the pith of the matter. The native race of Fiji is fast dying out; not altogether because too many children die, though that is bad enough, but because the women do not give birth to children in anything like the number that they ought. I do not like writing on this point because it is one that ought to be dealt with by figures, and there are, as far as I know, none on the subject; but my opinion is that to the married natives of Fiji not more than two children on an average are born. It has been asserted that a race, no matter of what colour, must die out if the number of children born to each married couple is not at least five. If such is the case how can any effort on the part of the Government stop the decrease unless the women are its first and chief care?

The true cause, therefore, of the decrease of the native race is, according to my view of the question, to be found—

(a) In the sterility of the woman;

(b) The truly phenomenal rate of mortality amongst infants.

And what is true of this Colony will, it appears to me, be most likely found true also of the rest of the Pacific.

I now approach a part of this subject, with which I am not competent to deal, and wish that some abler pen than mine could be found to touch it. Supposing what I said about the average number of children born to each married couple to be true, why is the native woman, when living with a husband of her own race, almost a barren woman, and, when living with a husband of an alien race (white is meant here), prolific? What causes are at work in the one case to make her barren, and in the other to bear numerous children? The above statement is not, I am aware, exactly in accordance with returns issued while Sir A. Gordon was Governor of this Colony. For they showed that the birth-rate was good. With all due deference to those returns, I maintain—that for at least one-quarter of a century the birth-rate has been very bad.

If I now introduce what is personal, it is only to give weight to my own argument, that there is hardly a married native woman in this Colony, who, under different social conditions and happier circumstances, would not give birth to five or six children. My wife is a woman of mixed race; her father was, for he is dead, a native of Tahiti, and her mother, who is living, a native of this Colony. That mother has given birth to seven children. Whippy, Simpson, and Pickering, all had numerous children by the principal women in their harems, and a few odd ones by the other women. I have had six children myself born to me. My wife strongly objects to any more, though she has only two of her own alive.

Now, what I want to point out by introducing this is, that the feeling against having more than two or three children is the natural feeling of every native woman—born of centuries of degradation, toil, and slavery. It doubtless goes a long way towards preventing them bearing many children, when taken in conjunction with their hard work and that dreadful fishing business. The latter, I believe, to be very bad for them, producing worse results than the work. Bad as the native death-rate is to-day, I believe it to be much less now than it was one hundred years ago. The same natural causes that are at work now were at work then; and many fearful unnatural ones have been suppressed within the last fifty years. To mention all the unnatural ones would be waste of time and labour, as His

Excellency

Excellency is as well aware of what they were as I am. A whole village has often been destroyed, neither man nor woman left alive, and the children—wrapped, living, in banana leaves—cast into the oven and cooked for the tyrant victor's feast.

Whether abortion is a factor worth considering or not I cannot say. It is a question I can give no opinion on whatever, though, next May, I shall have dwelt amongst these people for a quarter of a century. I have not yet been able to learn that it was ever practised to an extent that would have any material effect on the increase or decrease of the race.

The decay of any uneducated race or nation must, I think, at the first start, appear to be both so slow and so small as probably not to be perceptible at all; very possibly at least half-a-century would elapse before the decrease of the population would be even thought possible. As years roll away and whole villages become depopulated, as the attendance at feasts becomes smaller, as chiefs find the number of their warriors becoming less; in fact as a real decrease is apparent to the eye, then people say, How rapidly the race is decaying!

I have tried to show that just the reverse takes place. That one hundred years ago, or even fifty, the decay of the native race of this Colony was much more rapid than it is at the present time.

It is, I believe, these causes that have led people to the erroneous conclusion that the Government of Fiji is in some way or another responsible for what appears the very rapid decay of the race since Annexation.

It may be as well here to state, as concisely as possible, what are my own views on the decadence of the native race. They are as follows:—

- (a) That the race is rapidly disappearing from the earth;
- (b) That this decay has not commenced or taken place within the short space of fifteen or twenty years, for that would be something before unheard of, I believe, in the history of any nation;
- (c) That for one hundred years at least, if not for a much longer period, the whole of the islands of the Pacific have been undergoing the same change;
- (d) That the causes at present operating in Fiji are natural, and to a great extent remediable. They result in partial barrenness of the women and a phenomenal death-rate amongst infants.

There is yet another phase of this subject upon which I must touch. It is, perhaps, the gravest side of all, for it goes to the very root of the system under which the natives live in this Colony. It is my firm belief that, as long as Chiefly rule exists in its present form, the Government will strive in vain to find a remedy for the evil they wish to remove.

North, South, East, and West, as far as I know, there is nothing but silent discontent—discontent all the more deadly because it is silent—doing slowly, but surely, its bitter unwholesome work in secret; and all the more to be dreaded, because the words that might bring redress are unspoken. This silent discontent is the natural outcome of centuries of despotic rule; and it is now one of the most difficult features in dealing with native matters, because it renders it almost impossible for any white man, Government officials especially, to know what the native mind on any matter concerning himself really is.

I want to know why should this be suppressed or disguised. Can any possible good come from perpetrating a wrong, or from representing the native as happy and contented when he is nothing of the kind?

The system under which he lives has, without the shadow of a doubt, made him in many ways a greater slave to his chiefs than he formerly was; and that has not tended to make him either happy or contented; and so long as he is neither happy nor prosperous according to his ideas and wants, or contented, so long will his numbers grow year by year less and less, till at last not one of the race will be left.

You may naturally suppose that I mean to infer that the Native Policy of the Government and the settled authority now established in Fiji are the causes of the natives' silent discontent. The native may say, and does, I believe, say it is, but I do not think it springs from any such source. As a matter of fact, I am afraid that we do not sufficiently consider the change that has been going on in the natives' mind for over fifty years—a change that I do not think they are aware of themselves.

Formerly they knew no state of existence, save obedience to their chiefs, and were happy, and possibly in a way contented, because they knew of no other state. All this is vastly changed now. They do know of a state, in which men can acquire property and hold it, in which no man has to walk 20 miles at a chief's word in order to deliver four or five yams, or else be fined; where men are not obliged to walk 100 miles on foot, and then have to swim from the mainland to Taviuui to build houses—not because there are no men in Cakaudrove, but simply to show the power of the chiefs. All this, and much more they know and see. Do you think that during fifty years it has made no change in them? Did they live in a climate less likely to tame lions than Fiji, they would have without doubt have fought for their freedom long ago.

But being what they are and where they are they obey, apparently without a murmur, the orders they receive almost every week from some Roko, Buli, or Turaga ni koro.

Now I should be extremely sorry if from all this you should think that I am an advocate for emancipation of the native from his chief. Such a measure would for a long time be fraught with evil, not only to the native himself, but to the Colony at large. I am simply stating what I believe to be part of the evil that has resulted, I believe inevitably, from the knowledge that, during the last fifty years, the native has acquired of the other races and other lands. These evils, doubtless, were unpreventable—knowledge was sure to come—and I should imagine that he was very quick to recognise a state that bore such a wonderful difference to anything he had ever dreamt or heard of. Be that as it may, these evils have a very marked effect on the population.

Unless I am very greatly mistaken, I think you will find that on the two large islands the towns that are furthest inland, that is furthest removed from Roko and Buli, have the greatest number of children, the largest area of food under cultivation, and most native property. To thoroughly understand

understand how the system under which the native lives has any bearing on the decay of the race, one would need be a trained physician, which I am not ; but it needs no medical knowledge, I am sure, to tell any one that if an individual will sink and perish under injustice and wrong, so also will a race or nation, especially when endowed with so small an amount of virility as the natives of the Pacific seem to be.

Sir, it has been too much the habit of unthinking people to endeavour to lay at the door of the Government the blame for whatever evil has occurred to the natives since Annexation. Should you imagine that I am trying to do the same, I would beg you to dismiss that thought from your mind.

But to my mind, look at this subject how you will, injustice and wrong are at the bottom of the evil. It matters little whether it is to-day or one hundred years ago ; whether the group in question be Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, New Hebrides, or Solomon Islands, injustice and wrong are now, and were then, in each and all of them in some form or other.

In some groups this injustice takes the form of fire, sword, war, rapine, and cannibal feasts. In Fiji it takes the shape of petty tyranny, very hard to bear, but up to the present borne with wonderful patience by a most patient and long-suffering people. Against the serious abuse of power by either Roko or Buli, I do not think anything need be said as the Government at Suva would, should such a thing occur, soon hear of it ; besides, that is not what operates so fatally on the welfare of the native race. It is to use a very common saying, "They feel as if they could not call their soul their own." They are everlastingly at the beck and call of Roko, Buli or Turaga ni koro, whose petty tyranny is, I believe, always just in an inverse ratio to his rank.

They are fined, in a manner that appears peculiar, for offences that are perfectly ridiculous. And by whom ? By Stipendiary Magistrate or by the native one ? By Roko, Buli, or responsible chiefs ? Not at all—but by irresponsible Turaga ni koros. Who gets these fines ? What in short becomes of the money is, I fancy, a mystery.

Of petty tyranny and oppression by the higher class of chiefs I absolutely know nothing. That it to some extent exists, I think probable. At various times I have heard stories about some of them that do not redound to their credit. But, as the stories most likely are false or only partly true, I refrain from mentioning them. But against the Turaga ni koros, as a class, I would, if I could, wage everlasting war. Within the last six years the power and authority they have obtained, and which seems gradually to have grown out of the system under which the natives live, is really so tremendously used—so capriciously, and without apparently one single thought for the welfare of the people—that one cannot but hope that the time has at last arrived when the Government may fitly change or modify this part of the Native Policy. As a matter of fact I do not suppose that it ever really was intended that these men should exercise authority over the villages ; but this, like many other evils, has resulted from the *Vakaturaga* system. A curious feature about this power is—that the nearer the village to the chief town the greater the Turaga ni koro's authority is, the more absolute his commands. The further the villages are away the weaker is the Turaga ni koro's influence : and the weaker that influence is the more prosperous the village.

In fact one can hardly help coming to the conclusion that very serious evils, undoubtedly unintended and unforeseen, have crept into the system under which the people live. To show that this rise in power of petty chiefs has not brought any real good to the people, I state that eight years ago it was quite possible to buy about 25 tons of yams on this river without distressing the people. I really do not think that the whole yam crop on both branches, if weighed this year, would amount to 25 tons or anything like it. Labour when I came here six years ago was abundant for, of course, short periods. I was not for a long time troubled on that score, but gradually it became impossible to get any work done unless the Turaga ni koro of the village allowed the men to work. Laws were passed at the district meetings forbidding any native to work for a white man, even for a week, unless he first went to the Buli and told him what the pay was to be and how long the work would take. Here I would remark that during the years in which the Turaga ni koros have dictated whether the people should work or not, and when the work was done took the money, I never knew or heard of one single instance in which at the sharing of the money the people were satisfied. From one to three pounds was always missing. Results beneficial to the welfare of the people would, I am sure, accrue if His Excellency would insist most solemnly on the people being left more alone, that is more to themselves, and by doing away with every vestige of authority from the headman of each village. Nobody can possibly doubt that a system that permits Bulis to periodically inspect the interior of the people's houses, and cut up and burn *lalakais* and mats because they are not new at his visit—that permits petty chiefs to interfere with the domestic life of the inhabitants of their villages—must, even though the people are patient and used to it, have a marked effect on their happiness and on their general surroundings.

Buli Wailevu, Buli Wainunu, Buli Serua and all chiefs who belong to a past generation—to a race so to speak that is dead—are, I am afraid, obstacles to any real good being done to the people. I doubt if it be possible to make them really understand that the welfare of the people should be their first consideration and not their own aggrandisement.

In conclusion I would say, that I do not believe that the decadence of the native race can be altogether prevented. The predisposing causes lie too deep in the social condition of the people themselves, but much can yet be done to render that decay so slow that the census return of 1901 will show a vast improvement over 1891. But the old order of things must give place to a new. The people must, be indeed, and not merely in word, the first care of the Government and of the chiefs of this Colony.

I have, &c.,
E. R. BALL.

George Aloys Peat, Esq., Planter, Tuvu Mila, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Tuvu Mila, 11 February, 1892.

In answer to the Governor's invitation to express my views on the Pacific Population Problem and other closely related matters, I forward three little pamphlets containing them for your perusal, feeling a request from such a source, for such a purpose, to be a command, which no fear of either giving offence, or incurring ridicule would justify me in disregarding.

Before, however, committing them to you, I hope, indulgent criticism, I would explain when and why they came into being. They all date from periods prior by several years to 1891. Not intended for publication they were written to relieve the *ennui* of an unwelcome leisure * * * Should their tone, which is certainly too oracular, or their contents, at any place cause a frown or raise a smile, kindly bear in mind that they were never intended to meet eyes other than my own.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE ALOYS PEAT.

[Enclosure No. 1.]

"THE VISION OF DRY BONES."

(Composed in 1887.)

Why will ye die,
O House of Israel?—
Ezekiel xviii. 31, xxxiii. 11.

AN ENDEAVOUR TO ACCOUNT FOR THE EFFACEMENT OF THE INHABITANTS OF OCEANICA.

Or shall we cross yon mountains blue,
Whose streams my kindred nations quaffed;
And by my side, in battle true,
A thousand warriors drew the shaft:
Ah! there, in desolation cold,
The desert serpent dwells alone,
Where, grass o'ergrown, each mondering bone
And stoncs themselves to ruin grown
Like me are deathlike old.
Then seek we not their camp—for there
The silence dwells of my despair.—
CAMPBELL'S *Gertrude of Wyoming*.

WHEN the white man first came into Oceanica, he found it thickly populated everywhere. Every speck of land in the vast expanse of the North and South Pacific, which could be made to support human life, carried its full complement of inhabitants, apparently healthy and thriving. Whether they were so in reality or not, it is now impossible to determine with certainty. After a comparatively short residence among them he has discovered, that now they are everywhere more or less diseased, and everywhere decreasing at a rate which is in places so enormous as to justify an assumption that they will very soon cease to exist altogether.

Students of the World's History tell us that the man of colour has always given place to his white brother, that the savage and the barbarian has always "wilted," so to speak, before the face of the civilised man. They however fail to remember that there is an exception to every rule, and that consequently there is or ought to be one to this.

Our immediate ancestors were men who thoroughly believed, and as thoroughly acted up to their belief, that "The Earth was *theirs* and the fulness thereof." They held any race of men to be absolutely impious, and consequently doomed to destruction under Divine wrath, who interfered with their peculiar privilege, *i.e.*, their indefeasible right to the entire possession of any portion of the earth's surface to which they might wander or be driven. They honestly never questioned the fact that might was right. They considered conquest as a permissible, in fact laudable, method of obtaining possession of another nation's hearths and homes.

"Times are changed considerably, and we are changed with them;" the rights of the feeble and the helpless are now beginning to be recognised; the aggrandisement of one nation or party at the expense of another without that other's consent, in place of being looked on as a justifiable conquest is, in an increasing number of cases, coming to be considered an insolent robbery; ceasing to be worthy of praise, is rapidly incurring censure. The white man of our day and race, on discovering the inexplicable death of his feeble brother does not complacently take possession of the ground before the body it covers is fairly cold, with pious remarks about the will of God on his lips. He searches his conscience to assure himself that *he* is not in fault. He occupies the vacated holding with a new and ever-increasing dread lest, in so doing, he incur the curse of Cain.

These are the feelings which have prompted the persevering efforts to discover a reason for the rapid disappearance of the inhabitants of the Pacific Islands. Efforts made by men of all those classes which are either connected with the question practically or interested in it scientifically. Hitherto, so far as I am aware, no one cause has been fixed on by a general consensus of opinion as the undoubted source of the evil, which all acknowledge; and consequently, no one remedial measure has as yet been indicated by every inquirer as proper to remove it.

Now, the discovery of this source of evil, the prescribing and successful application of this sovereign remedy, has been guaranteed to the Fijians on England's honour. She has virtually staked her reputation that for them she will arrest and roll back the flood of oblivion which threatens to overwhelm all their neighbours. Hitherto she has, on her own showing, entirely failed to do so. She has had the uncontrolled management of the race for over fifteen years; and the decrease, far from being stayed, is as great in proportion as when she first made the promise and took the responsibility. In spite of honest and long-continued efforts to not only arrest the decrease, but to show an increase among her *protégés*—efforts directed by men justly held entirely capable and conversant with the subject—these *protégés* will, if the present state of things lasts only a few score of years longer, relieve her of all anxiety on their behalf, by the simple but effectual expedient of ceasing to exist altogether.

It is recorded in the life of Themistocles, that, on an occasion when it was necessary to appoint two generals, one subordinate to the other, the parties eligible were so numerous and so influential, an authoritative nomination by an external authority would procure the nominees much dislike, and the expedition would fail through want of co-operation among its leaders. It was therefore determined that each person eligible for either position should privately write a ballot-paper containing the two names which he considered the most fit for the respective offices. This having been done and the papers examined, it was found that while each man had claimed the first place for himself, he had indicated Themistocles as certainly most fitted for the second. And so in reading this paper, if any idea of mine corresponds more or less closely to one seldom if

if ever omitted in the large mass of matter relating to this question before the public already, then that idea is well worth consideration, while any which rest solely on my own opinion, and which are not mentioned by other authorities, will probably be found of little or no value, unless supported by strong evidence or dependant on correct deduction.

Who shall decide when doctors disagree? When this question was penned it seemed so puzzling to the querist that he evidently took it for granted every one must "give it up." Nowadays, it presents little difficulty. Nowadays when doctors disagree, which I remark *en passant* they very frequently do, they at once call in a specialist; that is a man who by devoting his energies to one subject only, has acquired for it a more intimate and practical knowledge than that possessed by any doctor, no matter how otherwise scientific, whose acquaintance with it is merely theoretical and scholastic. The diet of a man who knows must always carry more weight than those of one who only thinks.

Ethnologists, anthropologists, and scientific men generally, when trying to solve the Pacific problem, seem to forget that to naturalists man is merely a mammalian animal and therefore, presumably, subject to all the laws which regulate the production and perpetuation of the other mammals.

We all know that for many years the breeding and rearing of domestic mammalian animals has been so well understood and so generally practised, that now any noted breeder of stock will (if given enough time to carry out his system) produce almost any kind of horse, cattle, dog, pig, or goat, to your order, and as per sample; with a perfect knowledge throughout the process of the intention and value of each step in it; and an almost perfect certainty that he will ultimately evolve the very animal required. This evolution includes both mental and bodily qualities. If he really understands his business he will produce you a racehorse, not only fleet and shapely, but stout and free; a draught horse not only clever and strong, but gentle and honest; a working-bullock not only powerful, but tractable; and a dog exactly adapted physically to your special requirement and with a sagacity for it, which will more than border on reason. Since then he can work these wonders among brute, there is a very strong logical reason to hold that if he could only get *carte blanche* to pursue his system among human mammals, he is assuredly able to produce results which would certainly cause surprise and amazement if we met them to-day.

I hold then, and I think I am justified in holding—that the stock-breeder who is not only practical but also scientific, who can give a reason for his rule of proceedings, theoretically, as well as carry it out practically and successfully—is of all men the one most qualified to give a reliable answer to the question which is the title of this article—is in fact the specialist to whose decision the other doctors ought to be willing to submit. Because when examined, stripped as far as possible of all extraneous sentimental matter, it resolves itself into (at least to my thinking) a comparatively easy inquiry of how to best breed, feed, and rear, a certain kind of stock, hitherto dealt with in an improper manner—in a manner in fact, which would have long ago proved fatal to any breed of animals other than human. I think further that far from the decrease and want of vitality being mysterious, enormous, unaccountable, &c., &c., as stated by most people, they appear to me to depend so evidently on the violation of a perfectly well-known rule, that the real wonder in the matter is, that both are not much more serious than we find them to be.

I do not claim to be a great or even a small breeder of stock. I am not acquainted with a very great many of the special proceedings necessary to produce a desired result in a particular case; but no one can live in a pastoral community without becoming aware of the fundamental principles concerned in producing and rearing a healthy, slightly, prolific, and therefore valuable breed of the animals under his charge, since on that value his own well-being depends entirely.

The breeder's first axiom is that like produces like—that is given two animals with the same permanent peculiarity, their offspring will certainly reproduce it. This axiom however, is so much perplexed by peculiarities which are *not* permanent, that it is in practice of little real value unless taken along with the precept—that to make peculiarities either of body or mind permanent, it is necessary to first form a breed, that is to bring into existence a family or tribe consisting of animals who have inherited, for quite a number of generations, some peculiarity of one of their common ancestors, and who will, therefore, thenceforth infallibly reproduce it in all of their offspring.

Tall brothers and sisters are usually very much alike. It would therefore seem, for the purpose of establishing a breed, very easy to select from a family a male and a female, whose union would reproduce any desired peculiarity the parents might have had, with more or less certainty—following up this first union by another between a brother and sister of the second family, and so on—the desired peculiarity becoming more and more permanent in each generation. This is called in-and-in breeding; and all systems of breeding which demand the union of individuals within certain given degrees of direct blood relationship, are in-and-in.

In theory, in-and-in breeding is perfect; in practice, it won't work at all. Because, though at first it produces the desired effect, and that with great celerity and certainty, it very soon saps the vitality of the descendants to such a degree that the breed dies out through sheer lack of power to produce any more offspring at all.

Pure in-and-in breeding, therefore, while it quickly produces animals very true to form, renders them short-lived and impotent for the purpose of perpetuation.

Out-and-out breeding is the reverse of in-and-in. It forbids the union of two animals in any way related by blood ties, except the most distant. It is, however, hardly more satisfactory than the other; for while the vitality of the animal produced is high, and its productive power great, there is no certainty of forecasting from those seen in the parents what the peculiarities of the offspring will be, since it frequently resembles neither.

Out-and-out breeding, therefore, while producing animals of great vital power and very prolific, leaves their prospective form an entirely open question.

The breeder's success depends, therefore, on the judgment he shows in mixing the two systems, so as to secure the most rapid evolution of the wished-for form or quality, together with a robust vitality and a great generative power; to ensure the long life of the breed itself, as well as that of its individual members. This is called sound breeding, and its outcome well-bred stock.

Vitality is of paramount importance to the breeder, since without it he must come to a stand-still. It is more weakened by a rigorous course of in-and-in breeding, than reinforced by an equally perfect out-and-out one.

The survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence—is fully recognised—was fully recognised practically by the stock-breeder before Darwin announced it as a scientific theory proved by fact. The fitness of a breed or race consists in its inherent power of adapting itself (without losing any of its valuable qualities) to a change in its circumstances, by evolving the characteristics requisite to first endure and then profit by it. This quality is much greater among civilised than among savage men. The pre-eminent fitness enjoyed by any breed only exists so long as the collateral circumstances of its production, maintenance, and reproduction remain precisely the same. So long as they do so, so long will the breed maintain itself at an average level, so to speak. This is the case with wild animals and some savages.

But as soon as any change takes place in any of those circumstances, then an immediate change must also take place in the breed. For as any change must impair the peculiar fitness for the fresh conditions that it had for the old, if not gifted with a power of rapidly accommodating itself to change, it will sink into decrepitude, slowly if free from the competition of a rival in the struggle, most rapidly if so embarrassed.

It must always be borne in mind that every alteration, whether it be for the better or the worse, equally necessitates some change in the breed hitherto perfectly fit, so that one which is theoretically beneficial, may very easily become fatal from the impossibility experienced in *rising to it* with sufficient rapidity.

Adaptability, or as I prefer to call it versatility, is, therefore, of nearly as great importance to the breeder as vitality.

The next matter to which the breeder directs his attention is,—How is his breed to be fed? This is most important, because it is a circumstance entirely under his control, and more instantaneous in its effects than the other two. For while in-and-in breeding will not do much visible harm before several generations have practised it, and versatility is acquired more slowly still, plenty or starvation affect every individual subject to them by either stunting or increasing their personal, mental, and bodily growth, thereby affecting the breed favourably or otherwise at the very start, and in one generation. When, therefore, we find a breed in bad case, through too long continued in-and-in breeding, and are either unable or, for other reasons, unwilling to have recourse to the uncertainties of a broad cross, a fresh run will sometimes work

work wonders; will sometimes restore the lost vitality to such a degree as to enable us to continue the process of evolution (brought to a stand-still for want of it), on the same lines and in the same manner as before.

A breeder, therefore, when required to solve the Pacific Population Problem, would inquire—

1st—On what system were they bred?

2nd—How were they, and how are they fed?

3rd—Are they possessed of sufficient versatility to derive benefit rather than take harm from the changes they have undergone formerly or are encountering now?

Having ascertained these particulars he proceeds to determine whether any important rule in the application of them has been violated; and if such be the case, he can at once put his finger on the cause of the mischief.

Let me now in this light review the facts connected with the inquiry I have undertaken. I find then that on every island in every group of Oceanica where any sort of reliable census is possible, the coloured population is found to be steadily decreasing. I think that, with the exception of the Gilbert Group, I am justified in assuming that where no census is possible, other data point to the fact that the same is the case. Further, that though greater in some places than in others, the difference is not important anywhere, while everywhere the evil is absolutely disastrous.

Some of the natives seem to have become aware of their perilous condition; but as that apprehension was roughly contemporaneous with the intrusion of the white man among them—to that intrusion they have naturally enough ascribed the evil, which they then for the first time became aware of.

Many inquirers have accepted their view of the case; some going so far as to hold that there is a mysterious malign influence surrounding the white man like a poisonous atmosphere, which stifles every coloured race encountering it.

I think this view is manifestly wrong. I believe it can be conclusively shown that the decrease is not materially, if, indeed, any greater in islands where the white population bears a large proportion to the coloured, than it is in those where that proportion is infinitesimal. I am pretty certain for instance, from personal observation, that in the Marshall Group, where there are only a few traders, it is quite equal to that found in Fiji where the whites form quite an appreciable percentage of the whole population.

Again, statistics show us that the negro who cannot in his own country hold his own against the *manifestly* (?) poisonous white man, is, in the United States where, in a decided minority, and of course subjected to all the supposed evils of white contact, we would expect his speedy extinction, nevertheless, *increasing* so fast as to utterly outstrip, in this particular, the destroyer (?) himself.

Here I cannot refrain from quoting some expression on this point printed by Governor Eyre in 1845, referring to the Australians.

"Year by year," he says, "the melancholy and appalling truth is only the more apparent; and as each multiplies upon us it becomes too fatally confirmed, until at last we are almost, in spite of ourselves, forced to the conviction that the first appearance of the white man in any new country sounds the funeral knell of the children of the soil."

Mr. Moffat, at about the same date, and speaking of the African Bushmen, says: "I have traversed those regions in which, according to the farmers, thousands once dwelt, but now alas! scarcely a family is to be seen. It is impossible to look over those now uninhabited plains and mountain glens without feelings of the deepest melancholy."

The Bushmen referred to by Mr. Moffat, a missionary of the highest standing, only second to Livingstone himself, are, if not absolutely negroes, near enough that breed to justify me in asserting that what would or has affected the one would or has equally affected the other, and that either for good or evil.

Let then any one who asserts the evil influence of the white man *per se* fairly face the facts of the case, which are undoubtedly these,—that while the negro breed in question is rapidly fading away before him in the Cape Colony, in Natal, and the Transvaal, it is in its turn threatening to as effectually oust him from Louisiana, Alabama, and Texas.

Armed with these pregnant facts I say, emphatically, no connection between white contact, *quâ* contact, can be made out; and further, that neither European disease, European vice, clothes, food, firearms, prostitution, feticide, monogamy, rum, nor true religion, either separately or all together, all of which have been warmly upheld by various persons as undoubted factors in the evil, do really effect it in the least.

For while the difference between the present state of these two breeds of negroes is enormous, I do not believe that between an average Cape colonist and an average American planter to be appreciable. Furthermore I hold it only reasonable to think that the obliteration of the negro, which is attributed to his contact with white men on the soil of Africa, was very much more likely to overtake him in America, if we are to accept the theory as correct, and, therefore, I say, and still more emphatically than before, that the reason of the rapid increase of the one branch of the family, while the other is as rapidly dying out, is not to be sought for in any outside influence at all, but depends entirely and solely on a difference produced between them by the different manner in which they have been bred and fed; that different manner arising from the fact that the American master bred and fed his slave with better judgment and more according to rule than the free African bred and fed himself.

The latter following too closely the vicious in-bred system forced on him by his situation, his feeling, and ancestral customs; the former practising that which has evolved Lady Suffolk, Dexter, Maude S, Bay Middleton, Flying Dutchman, and Stockwell, out of the horse which carried a pack from York to London for our ancestors.

In American hands, the African negro has become the longest-lived, almost the strongest, and far away the most prolific man we know; and if he only acquires the mental qualities of courage, pugnacity, and endurance which theoretically he is likely to acquire, then I fancy our cousin will find to his cost that out of the sickly and dying elements put into his hands he has managed to construct a Frankenstein, who will very shortly give him much more trouble and anxiety than he at all bargained for.

With that trouble and anxiety we have happily nothing to do, but with the way it has been brought about much. The American planter, man-breeder if you will, has already, unconsciously perhaps, revealed the cause which I proposed to search for in this article; and the outcome of his successfully applied remedy seems to encourage us to go and do likewise. His *bête noire* his *Frankenstein*—could we only create his Oceanic counterpart—is just the man to repopulate the Pacific. Let me, therefore, endeavour to trace the man-breeder's method—noting with what he began, how he proceeded, how ended; what difficulties he met, and how he met them; where he was successful and where he failed. Then when we are more or less conversant with the history of the case, let us endeavour to see how far and with what chance of success it can be applied by us to the inhabitants of Oceanica, and more particularly to those of Fiji.

Before proceeding to do this, however, it seems to me needful to clearly define the terminology of which I am about to make use—and this for two reasons. The first is, that breeding having been hitherto conducted by men as a rule, more practical than scientific, it has not as yet acquired concise terms for many of its processes; secondly, the vague terminology which has acquired an uncertain recognition from breeders is partly unknown to me. I will therefore set down here the various terms of which I intend to make use, with the exact meaning I attach to each, premising that many are entirely empirical, and none of any value in their restricted sense beyond this pamphlet.

<i>A qualification</i>	Is any property of the mind or body possessed or acquired, by which development is facilitated.
<i>Power</i>	Is a qualification of the body.
<i>Virtue</i>	Is a qualification of the mind.
<i>A disability</i>	Is a property possessed or acquired, by which development is retarded.
<i>Weakness</i>	Is a disability of the body.
<i>Vice</i>	Is a disability of the mind.
<i>To evolve</i>	Is to produce new properties.
<i>To develop</i>	To evolve new qualifications.
<i>To deteriorate</i>	Is to evolve new disabilities.

A Characteristic

- A characteristic* Is a peculiarity either bodily or mental, by which the individual who has it is distinguished from others.
- A permanent characteristic* ... Is one which has become hereditary, that is which will certainly pass from parent to child.
- A breed* Is a group of individuals who possess the same permanent characteristics. Breeds are allied when they possess a large number of the same permanent characteristics ; alien when only a few. A breed which has reached the utmost development of which it is capable, is said to have attained its crisis.
- Crisis.* A breed whose evolution has caused it to become fittest for survival is said to be dominant.
- Dominant* Crossing is changing the system under which a breed has been produced and perpetuated.
- Crossing* Is removing the breed to a fresh habitat and new conditions, but without changing the system under which it has been produced and perpetuated.
- Transplanting* Is a subdivision of the breed which shows its permanent characteristics with slight and unimportant variations.
- A race* Blood-relationship (or kinship) between individuals consists in the fact that they are descended directly from the same pair of parents. Between races, in descent from the same pair of breeds. Its closeness depends on the distance from that pair.
- Blood-relationship (or kinship)* Is a union between two individual races or breeds, which transmits only the qualifications of both.
- A nick* A union transmitting only their disabilities.
- A miss* A union transmitting both qualifications and disabilities of both.
- A combination* Is the system of breeding called in-and-in. It consists in the union of individuals and, I think, races who are within certain degrees of blood-relationship.
- Near breeding* Is the advantageous union of blood-relations, whether individual or racial, beyond those degrees.
- Sound breeding* Is the union of individuals or breeds which have no blood-relationship at all.
- Far breeding*

I have said before that evolution affects all characteristics, mental as well as bodily. There is, however, a radical difference between the process of development and that of deterioration worth noting, for while the former evolves the virtues after the powers, the latter evolves the vices before the weaknesses. Thus the virtues which come last go first. Here I venture to remark that the virtues of a breed of men seem to me to be more valuable to them than the virtues of a breed of animals is to it, to have more influence in securing and retaining dominion in the first case than in the last, and that the converse is the case with the powers. We have before us the history of many dominant races of men, and while some were very powerful others appear to have been comparatively weak. But all, while climbing to dominion and really dominant, seem to have possessed in greater or less degree the virtues of chastity, love of home and its duties, courage, pugnacity, endurance, reverence, and faith. We have also seen many obliterated ; and it was invariably the vices of lust, hatred of home and its duties, cowardice, tameness, indolence, irreverence, and unbelief, which first announced their crisis, accompanied their rapid deterioration, and finally dug their graves.

Man is a gregarious animal by instinct ; that is a number of human beings thrown together fortuitously, show a marked tendency to coalesce and form a group for the purpose of mutual protection and benefit. The group once formed however resents violently any interference with its possessions, whether made by stray individuals not yet joined to it or by other groups. So long as it remains savage, that is so long as the instincts of the individuals composing it have the most share in shaping its conduct, any person or group of persons outside its well-defined limits is looked on as so certain to be injurious to its interests, that their removal, or failing that destruction, is manifestly needful. With the slow increase of reason, savagedom gives place to civilisation ; the formerly furiously hostile groups join more and more. *Hostis* no longer expresses in one word stranger and enemy. Still the group, when eventually expanded into a nation, retains a slowly decreasing, but ever instinctive, dislike to the alien. If the group is small—and all savage groups are small—it forbids accretions from without, and confines itself strictly to its own limits ; then, although the individuals forming it were originally in no way related, they will very soon be practising near breeding to such an extent, that disastrous results must follow. Such in fact has been the case everywhere ; and the remedies, groups still savage have devised and applied to their condition, when looked at from a breeder's point of view, are merely efforts, more or less successful, to resume sound or enforce far breeding. The Australians have devised a classificatory system of relationship which has a more marked effect on the first than our own, and the second is enforced more effectually still by marriage by capture, familiar to every ethnologist. Here the strongest group has recourse to a very close approach to far breeding ; and while it no longer slaughters all the members of the surrounding groups, instinctively it seizes on their women as a means of continuing its own existence under a much more rational impulse.

This is all very well and practicable more or less successfully on a continent where groups, numerous originally, have had so much room to expand that they have developed into races and then into breeds. But in an island, especially a small island, it is not possible. In this case the group sooner or later, in proportion to the size of its territory, comes to a pass where no expedient at its command can counteract the fatal near breeding the situation forces it to practise ; very soon the regular importation of fresh blood from beyond sea becomes the only possible course that will render sound breeding possible, but surrounded by extreme difficulty and danger. Marriage by capture between the inhabitants of the different island archipelagoes of the Pacific seems to have been little practised, in fact hardly known.

Even in a continent as large as Africa the groups or tribes of savage natives, everywhere more or less isolated by this hostility of their neighbours and their own cowardice, followed an approach to near breeding sufficiently close to produce injurious effects on their minds and bodies. How injurious may be seen by a comparison made between an indigenous inhabitant of the Zambesi or Congo, and a Down South Nigger worth five thousand dollars ; between King Mtese, head rain doctor, and that pure negro, a worthy and esteemed occupant of the episcopal bench of the Church of England.

We are not permitted to do evil that good may come, and undoubtedly slavery was an evil ; still to that evil the gigantic negro labourer of the Southern States of America owes his herculean power ; to that evil the negro bishop owes the learning and the intelligence which has made us at last realise that the doom passed by the patriarch on Ham may haply not rest on his descendants for ever.

The slave captain procured his human cargo from every part of the coast of Africa. It comprised members of every known race of negroes. The unutterable horrors of the dread middle passage ensured in a more efficient, if terrible, manner the survival of the fittest. A planter's gang of niggers consisted therefore of picked men and women, torn from half the continent indiscriminately. He caused unions among them, without any regard to their relationship, race, breed, ancestral custom, or inclination, and only suggested by his own profit involved in the production of a numerous body of strong healthy and prolific labourers. He necessarily crossed them with a vengeance, and he entirely revived and rehabilitated the breed by doing so. But he objected to intellect. He didn't want that ; and he didn't breed for that. Quite otherwise. Nevertheless, since (as I have endeavoured to point out) development affects *pari passu*, powers and virtues, he rather unexpectedly got a good deal more of it than he wanted. As the negro race developed in his hands its members, at first willing inmates of the quarters, began to wish to know why they were excluded from the house ; began to want to get that share of equality their increasing reason claimed as their due ; began to object, and that forcibly, to the abominable formula—All races of men, bar one, are equal in the eyes of the Republic. Here war put an end to the experiment. Who can tell where it would have landed him if carried out to its crisis still far distant ; who say with certainty which race would have finally become the dominant one in the unhealthy States ?

I do not think there can be any question about that now. The freedom too soon acquired by the negro slave was his death-warrant. Forced by white contempt back into his former African condition of isolation, and deprived by his still unremoved

unremoved indolence and general improvidence of the regular supplies of nutritious food provided for him by his master's care—the greater because it was entirely selfish, and to that master's interests—his instincts, still stronger than his reason, will cause the resumption of near breeding in small stationary groups or communities. A very short time will then turn his, at present to us alarming, increase into a, as alarming to him, decrease. The white race, a rover by nature and inclination, ever crossed by immigration, and thus tied down to sound breeding, will infallibly run him down and sink him for ever.

Having now got rid of much prefatory matter, which has run to an unexpected but not, I think, unnecessary length, let me take up the special inquiry to which I addressed myself. I have satisfied myself, and I hope my reader also, that universal and long-continued near breeding among the people was the principal, if not the sole, cause of their decrease,—the rate of that decrease depending on the period of time the system has been followed, and the length to which it has been pushed,—that, *ceteris paribus*, it is greatest in those groups whose inhabitants claim to be indigenous, and least when the remembrance of their (possibly only last) migration is most vivid;—Hawaii belonging to the first class; New Zealand, and especially the Gilbert, to the second. I have come to the conclusion therefore, that every one of the Oceanic races and breeds had passed its crisis, and that all were slowly deteriorating before the white man made his appearance in either the North or the South Pacific. That the slow deterioration they were spontaneously undergoing was in some places materially hastened by the advent of a formidable rival for existence seems pretty clear. But that the rival happened to be white I take to be of no importance, for I find the Gilbert Islanders swept the inhabitants off the north half of the Ellice Group in exactly the same way (on a smaller scale) the Anglo-Saxon is removing the Maori from New Zealand, while the Maori himself brought about, on the very same ground from which his own disappearance is deplored, the annihilation of an indigenous feeble breed of negro or negrito inhabitants—and that by the most expeditious of all possible means, since the way he ate them up was actual, and not merely figurative.

It matters little then, to my way of thinking, to ascertain from whence any race derived their origin, but much to ascertain how long they have passed their crisis. For never was the familiar quotation—

“Facilis descensus Averni sed revocare gradum hic labor, hoc opus est”

more pertinent. *Revocare gradum* is impossible to tribes deficient in the glorious power of the Anglo-Saxon race to govern itself. Such must be forced to work out their redemption as men under authority, like the Roman centurion of the Gospel. The remedy for their sickness unto death is no doubt nauseous. All real remedies are so. I think, therefore, it is not sufficient that the physician hold it to their lips. He must have ample power to cram it down their throats if they are, “clothed and in their right mind,” to take once again their place among the dominant races of men.

[“*The Glasgow Weekly Herald*,” July 25, 1891.]

A REPUBLICAN ANOMALY.

“AN American paper contains on one page the report of a racy and eloquent speech, delivered by an ex-Senator—ex-Senator Ingalls, if the reader chance to know him—‘on the platform of the immense amphitheatre of the National Chautauqua,’ in which, after referring in glowing terms to the unparalleled growth of the United States in population, wealth, and power, he winds up with the declaration that ‘the American Government is based upon the New Testament, upon the teachings of Jesus Christ, who declared that all men were equal before the law, and that the fatherhood of God resulted in the brotherhood of man.’ It need not be said that this peroration was indorsed by a round of applause. On the next page of the same paper an incident is related which forms a strange commentary on this text. The Missouri State Training School is now, or was then, in session. This is an institution which has been organised for the purpose of training, examining, and licensing the higher class of teachers for important educational positions in the State, such as college professors, headmasters of academies, high school teachers, &c. Some 300 eminent, and it is to be presumed intelligent and enlightened members of the teaching profession had entered, and everything promised a harmonious and successful session, when an apple—a black apple—of discord was suddenly thrown in amongst the assembled pedagogues. A “coloured” gentleman holding a high position in the profession sent in his name to be placed on the roll as a candidate for certification. This was a Mr. Crockfield, President of the Coloured Schools of the State. The 300 white dominies were at once in a ferment. No doubt President Crockfield was under the impression that he belonged to those “made brothers through the common fatherhood of God,” and over whom the American Constitution throws its ægis so ostentatiously, and that he had as good a right as any of his white brethren to come forward for examination and license. He found himself mistaken, however. At a secret meeting of the Executive Committee an ‘eminent educator,’ a ‘late candidate,’ we are told, ‘before the Democratic Convention for the State Superintendentship of Public Schools,’ but whose name is not given, declared that ‘the school could choose between him and the negro—one of them had to go.’ There was some discussion on the matter—to the credit of the teaching profession it appeared there were some dissentient voices—but the result was that President Crockfield was requested to make himself scarce, and had ‘to go.’

“What does ex-Senator Ingalls or Mr. Andrew Carnegie think of this? Such occurrences are almost as incongruous with the professed free principles on which the State is founded, and society ostensibly constituted in the great Western Republic, as was slavery itself. Is there no likelihood that this virulent antipathy of white to black will in time be modified? What we are continually hearing of deadly struggles between the races—in which the whites always seem to be the aggressors—and of the social ostracism of what are called ‘coloured’ men and women, seems to show that but little progress has been made as yet in that direction. It must come, however. Eight millions of blacks, becoming richer, better educated, and more intelligent every year, cannot go on living as a sort of social outcasts. They must either be tolerated or ‘absorbed.’ Some time ago an American ‘scientist’ or statesman—we forget which—put forward ‘absorption,’ seriously, as the only possible solution of the race problem. The Government was to promote mixed marriages, and in course of time the difference would disappear. The resultant was neither to be so white as the whites nor so black as the blacks, nor to possess the mental characteristics of either, but to be an improvement on both. He was to unite Yankee acuteness and activity with negro fervour and good-humour. This philosopher calculated that the race which would emerge from ‘absorption’ would very much resemble the Ancient Egyptians, who have certainly left records to show they were of a type not to be sneezed at. To absorb 8,000,000 of negroes would be a big job, even for 56,000,000 of whites, and many wry faces would certainly be made over it; but it may be really the only way of ridding the Republic of a social anomaly, which W. D. Howells, in his new story just begun in *Harper*, pronounces ‘one of the most preposterous and monstrous things in the world.’”

[Enclosure

[Enclosure No. 2.]

"FRESH FIELDS AND PASTURES NEW."

(Composed in 1889.)

And a certain man drew a bow at a venture,
and smote the King of Israel between the joints of his harness :—
I. Kings xxii. 34, II. Chronicles xviii. 33.

AN ENDEAVOUR TO SUGGEST A PLAN TO AMELIORATE THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE NATIVE INHABITANTS OF FIJI.

Oh ! cruel Woodfall ! when a patriot draws
His gray-goose quill in his dear Country's cause,
To vex and maul a ministerial Race,
Can thy stern soul refuse the Champion place ?
Alas ! thou knowest not with what anxious heart
He longs his best-loved labours to impart,
How he has sent them to thy brethren round
And still the same unkind reception found :
At length indignant will he damn the State,
Turn to his trade, and leave us to our fate.—
CRABBE'S *The Newspaper*.

THERE are two facts which prove to any mind that the Fijian is not an indigenous race. The first is of great significance. Their possession of the flying proa of the Malay Archipelago—although here we find it in a somewhat rudimentary state, while it is not known to the inhabitants of New Hebrides, and only recently to those of Tonga and Samoa—seems to point with considerable certainty to an old-time immigration from some part of the Malayan Group in the Indian Ocean. The second, while less significant is still worthy of notice. It is that the beach people are lighter coloured than the bush ones. This seems to indicate that the immigration consisted of a considerable number of lighter coloured, if not yellow, maritime race, as distinguished from an intensely black and landward, indigenous one. I have remarked in Australia, that in the tropics, owing, no doubt, to their constant exposure without shelter to a blazing sun on the salt water, the beachmen are many shades darker than the bushmen ; and I hold myself correct in assuming that wherever the contrary is found to be the case, the original inhabitants have been driven back by lighter-coloured invaders from *outré mer*.

But this Malay immigration is now so ancient as to have left only the very faintest echoes among the traditions of the Fiji Group, and consequently the benefit derived from it by the combined race must have long ago disappeared.

A small and friendly colonisation from Tonga, however, of much more recent date has developed the windward portion of the race so much more than could have been expected, that the cause effecting it cannot, I think, escape the even casual observer to whom the breeding of any domestic animal is at all familiar.

I have said in a previous paper that the Oceanic races are all past their crisis, and are all deteriorating gradually ; also, that since the strength of the remedy must be proportioned to the severity of the evil, it is of vital importance to ascertain just how long they have passed it, and, again, that their own traditions are of no help to us in doing so. But I think we possess a criterion by which we can fix the time elapsed, and that with considerable certainty. This criterion is the state of their virtues and their vices. Apply this test to the Kai Viti, and without fear or favour, extenuating nothing, setting down naught in malice, I find that lust in the shape of fornication, adultery, and rape is rapidly extinguishing their chastity which was at one time real, if perhaps only enforced ; that a cruel and unnatural indifference to their offspring on the part of the parents, especially on that of the mother (which is one of the principal causes of the appalling death-rate of infants), has taken the place of their former domesticity, which, notwithstanding the contrary opinion of monogamists, is abundantly possible in a polygamous household, and was at one time very great among Fijians ; that they are becoming from day to day ever more cowardly, craven, and indolent—the latter to such an extent, that in most districts distressingly short supplies of really good and nutritious food are the rule rather than the exception ; that their vitality is sinking so fast the presence of the grandfather at the successive graves of most of his grandsons excites no comment and little surprise.

I conclude therefore that their crisis is long past, and that therefore heroic measures are called for, and that on the instant.

Here I find myself compelled to proceed with great diffidence. In this matter I have, as I said before, no claim to be considered a specialist or even a doctor, *ne sutor ultrâ crepidam* comes into my mind with telling force, and yet—and yet though I would not even whisper it in public, in private I cannot help thinking Sir Arthur Gordon's method of putting Fiji on a better footing was that of the merest cobbler. I admire his honest conviction, his undoubted talent, his great learning, his ready resource, and the splendid courage of his opinions which he possessed, but nevertheless I think he started with two fatally wrong assumptions.

1st—He believed that the crisis of the Fijian race was not yet attained.

2nd—That not possessing great versatility, it only required time to develop until it did attain it. That, granted that time, it would become dominant on its present lines.

Every measure he recommended or change he enforced was based on these two assumptions. Had they been correct most material progress would ere now have become manifest ; but as this is lamentably far from being the case, I feel certain that the whole proceedings, from start to finish, have been both theoretically and practically wrong.

Sometimes when we are endeavouring to depict a process with which we are not familiar a simile drawn from one with which we are, gives at one glance a grasp of the situation whole pages of laboured explanation fail to confer. Let me here make a very simple and to me obvious one. Making a nation is like making a wine. The juice of the grape put into a cask is allowed to stand to work out ; after a certain time it is racked off into a fresh one to fine. So long as it has not worked out it can be delayed in doing so by various devices called, I believe, doctoring ; but as soon as it has, nothing but racking off will serve if it is ever to attain any real excellence. Great experience on the part of the vigneron is requisite before he can determine with nicety the exact moment when racking off must take place. Pursuing my simile, Sir Arthur Gordon thought that that moment had not arrived for the Fiji wine he was making. He had recourse to doctoring. He was, I say, in error. It had. Racking had become necessary ; and by letting his vintage stand on the lees he did it harm, which I sincerely hope is not yet irreparable ; but nothing is to me more certain than that it will be so shortly.

Ex post facto censure is immeasurably easier than sound prophetic advice, and therefore "I told you so" is to one found in error about the most irritating phrase in any language. But for many years the ideas I now for the first time commit to paper have been present to my mind, and many and various have been the reformatory systems I have in day-dreams seen myself applying with no less success than applause to the evil. In an acquaintance of a few days with Mr. Bingham, the well-known missionary from Hawaii, I learned that the king of that country, who is an enlightened native, alarmed at the rapid extinction of his people, proposed to himself to remove the evil by importing a number of Gilbert Islanders, men of a closely-allied race, endowed with a vitality phenomenal in Oceania. I met his recruiting vessels, and studied his system well at the time. It appeared to me—for I held then the same views I do now—sound and logical ; sure to succeed. The outcome has not been encouraging. His carefully selected and liberally rewarded immigrants never to any extent amalgamated with their new neighbours, were found to suffer so dreadfully from home-sickness, and so determined to end their days and lay their bones on their own miserable sand-patches, right reason or none, that after a few years His Majesty found himself much out of pocket and taking nothing by his motion.

Again I remarked that while the cross between the European and Fijian is generally more of a miss than of a combination, that between the Fijian and the African negro is always a combination, and sometimes approaches a nick.

I therefore advocated (to myself) the free importation of the there despised, but here to be appreciated nigger of the Southern States of America, quite clear that every facility and help might be depended on from the Americans, who would be only too pleased to consign the whole race to the middle of the Pacific, and quite indifferent whether the consignment sank

sank or swam, so long as it never came back. Having made some cautious inquiries on this head from Americans I met, I found they were all so much more than willing to send Sambo to the hottest place known of, and on the instant, that it struck me forcibly,—If so great and powerful a people consider him such a ticklish, troublesome, and in fact ngly customer, we might discover to our cost that we had caught a fatally formidable Tartar when we got him here. This plan therefore, though presenting several advantages, and theoretically good, would not, I at last felt convinced, meet our case.

I came, therefore, to the conclusion that Fiji must be saved from within, since no effectual help can reach her from without. How then shall we revert to sound breeding now imperatively demanded by a race fast becoming impotent. Only one course remains open—not by any means certain, but still well worth trying.

Transplant them within their own limits. Sir Henry Maine and various other jurists have exhausted the resources of their well-stored minds in endeavouring to put before us vividly the laws of our own not so very remote ancestors; such as the power of the House father, the tenure of the Tribal land, the Mark, &c., *ad infinitum*—I had almost said *ad nauseam*. One and all have been lauded for their lifelike reproduction for students of a state so archaic, that it would never have been suspected, far less understood, except for their lifelong, painful, but well-directed labour. Had these students taken a trip instead of attending lecture, and come here, they would very recently indeed have found the whole system in most excellent going order in Fiji; and far from being obscure history only realisable by an effort of the mind, plain legal facts in everyday use, against which their countrymen often kicked their legal shins most grievously.

What Sir Henry called that system I forget, and I have not his books to refer to at hand; but I think that as we dropped it with advantage when effete, it is just about time the Fijian dropped it too. It reached with small differences in degree, but none in kind, in our history right down to the Norman Conquest, and then William introduced an entirely fresh one with the high hand and the very best effect. That system was the Feudal. And, by analogy, I hold that a modified Feudal system, with a Lord of the Manor and his yeomen, is far and away the best, and altogether the more logical reform that could be devised in our present need of one.

The Muse of history repeats herself, always with the same meaning, never in the same words. If then we wish to effect in one race some evolution now become historical in another, let us repeat history with a difference.

Let the Governor, another Norman, repeat William's policy, with all William's power but none of his barbarity. Let him mark out various manors in suitable parts of the country. To them transplant a body of deserving Fiji yeomen—their desert to be gauged by their chastity, large family, industry, and general good health of mind and body. Let these persons, brought from every part of the group, be given a piece of land under a tenure entailing yeomen service, of which they can only be deprived, that service being rendered, by their own gross misconduct or an absolutely needful resumption by the Government for public purposes. Make the sale or mortgage of that land illegal and void. Let them render the yeoman service direct to the Lord of the Manor, *i.e.*, Governor in either money, kind, or labour as he shall see fit to appoint. Remove them from the power of their chiefs, make *lala* altogether, and *kerekere* as far as possible, illegal. Encourage them to feed, and particularly to house, stock; let each healthy child of a certain age receive his or her holding of land under the supervision and for the benefit of the father and mother; introduce the system of paid labourers; put up schools of learning and agriculture; and churches. Name of strife. For while no people can get on without religion, what religion are we to teach them? It seems *outré* to recommend Church of England, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan manors. And yet, perhaps, a rivalry between different sects might prove beneficial to all. The yeomen would soon come to be using milk, beef, and goats' meat in abundance; would soon have pigs and poultry in profusion. Housed stock take a vast deal of labour to feed when their owner is only armed with a *doko*. I think their endurance—that is their perseverance in steady work—would be much greater than it is at present when every blow the labourer struck was for his own and sole benefit, every beast he housed his own and sole property.

Children would be reared for their parents' profit and by love, instead of being, as now, shamefully sacrificed to their indifference, for their ease. The manure of their stables and yards, and the instruction of their agricultural school, would render possible and bring in a more civilised agriculture; while the mixture of persons from the most remote portions of the group would restore sound breeding as far as it can be restored within the race itself, thereby increasing its vitality. The transplanting, and more nutritious food, would fortify that vitality to such an extent that the breed could carry on, without fear of the instant disappearance which threatens it now, until the long-awaited-for versatility came, enabling it to thoroughly assimilate all these advantages, and to resume with vigour its long-forgotten development, and that towards a crisis much higher than was ever possible to it before.

This change of system might be made gradually. Manors might be marked out indeed in any fertile tract; but only a small percentage of the population could, or in fact should, be removed to them at once. The first experiments might even be limited to a few score of persons under the supervision of the Stipendiary Magistrate. If the scheme answered, these would serve as the nuclei of social reform, and prove fountains of youth—more real than that so long and so vainly sought for by the Spaniard in Florida—would act like the almost invisible grafts of new skin modern surgery fixes on the ghastly surface of an ulcer, effecting thereby a much more speedy cure and preventing the disfiguration and crippling contraction formerly considered inevitable.

[Enclosure No. 3.]

“A NEW ORDER OF MERIT.”

(Composed in 1890.)

She is hardened against her young ones, as if
they were not her's: though her labour be in
vain, she is without fear.—

Job xxxix. 16.—(Revised version.)

A CONSIDERATION OF THE PRESENT DISASTROUS INFANT MORTALITY IN FIJI: ITS PROXIMATE CAUSES AND POSSIBLE CURE.

Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,
Laughs to her friends among the crowd.—

Sir WALTER SCOTT'S *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

THE solving of a problem in social science is always a difficult matter. There is always a train of intermediate, inter-dependent circumstances between it and its remote or primary cause. To understand the problem thoroughly, to get the key of the situation, that primary cause must be found; but it is sometimes of more practical importance to find out what influence the intermediate circumstances have on each other and on it, than to do so.

Such a problem presents itself in the rapid decrease of the Fijians. It is the object of this paper to ascertain from what causes, other than the primary, that decrease arises; and by what remedies, other than the ultimate one, it can be stayed.

The primary cause is, as I have endeavoured to show in my previous paper on this subject, a serious departure from sound breeding. But a most important proximate one is the large death-rate of infants and young children. Some persons have gone so far as to say that this infant mortality is the primary and, in itself, sole cause of the decrease.

It is, therefore, most important to find out why these children die; whether there are any sufficient reasons in the circumstances connected with them after they are born why they don't live; to determine (allowing for the feeble constitution they received before they were born) whether they would have lived had they received good treatment after; to ascertain whether they received bad treatment and, if so, why so.

I find that the treatment is atrociously bad in every way; that these unfortunate infants and young children receive very little really proper food and, that after the excitement of their birth and the novelty of their presence in the household dies out, not even decent attention.

I believe that, while a good many from constitutional weakness would never have survived at all, that by far the larger portion—fully 75 per cent.—have been fairly starved to death, and that this state of things has been brought about by the physical inability, ignorance, and apathy of one or of both parents.

Of these causes I will examine physical inability first, because it did not exist under polygamy, and may perhaps have first given rise to it.

Graminivorous animals suckle their young much longer than carnivorous ones do. A kitten passes from mother's milk to flesh in a few weeks; a calf cannot subsist on grass alone for months. A vegetarian race must, and does, suckle their children longer than one which eats much meat. The same rule holds good among human beings. Our upper and middle class mother, if she suckle her infant at all, weans it in a few months. I have seen among the peasantry in Lancashire a child still at the breast who could run about and speak quite plainly—was, in fact, close on two years old—and it seemed to excite no surprise. I gathered that it was quite a common occurrence. These peasants were pretty strict vegetarians; but the length of time the mother suckled her child did not depend on that fact, certainly unknown to her, but on her wish to have no more children at all. She knew, or thought she knew, that so long as she suckled her first child constantly and faithfully she would not conceive a second.

This is not the case with the Fiji mother. Months before her infant can safely dispense with her breast, it dries up from a second conception having taken place; and, unless she takes measures either to prevent this occurring, or to substitute suitable food for the lost natural nourishment, her infant must die. As a polygamist, she left her husband's company and never returned to it, till the existence of her child was assured, till it could live on the ordinary food of adults. As a monogamist, she is utterly lost; she blunders hopelessly and helplessly along, and probably only rears eventually the last of what ought to have been a family of eight or nine; and that because old age stepping in puts an end to her reproductive power, and the last child gets the long period of lactation denied to his predecessors. A return to polygamy is now quite impossible. Modern civilisation and our Christian religion forbid such a return utterly. The whole clerical body to whom the instruction of the people is confided look on a polygamous house father as one manifestly transgressing both the laws of God and those of nature. In the first supposition they may be, in the second they are certainly not correct. I find, then, that at present for this physical inability of the Fiji mother there is not any efficient remedy,—it is an evil which cannot be cured and must be endured.

The entire ignorance of the proper way of enduring it is the second cause; which I will now consider.

This ignorance is twofold. The Fiji mother is not, and never was, a nurse. She neither knows how to prepare proper food—food suited to the abnormal condition of her infant—nor how to give the kind she has with judgment. Physicians tell us that, to ensure health, food must be given at regular intervals; that time must be allowed between meals to allow the stomach to digest one before it receives another; that, above all things, this member must not be overgorged.

Animal food is much more rapidly digested than vegetable—or, rather, the effect of a meal of animal food in staying hunger is almost immediate, while that of a vegetable one is long deferred. A child at the breast, or fed on a carefully prepared substitute for milk, has at intervals an easily satisfied hunger; one deprived of milk and fed on vegetable food only is ravenously hungry all the time. An experienced nurse, having given the proper and sufficient meal of vegetable food at the proper time, hears its cries with indifference, certain they will cease when the tardy digestion is at last taking place. The Fiji mother crams and crams her infant so long as, and whenever, it screams for more, under the impression that the food, really fatal when so given, is really needful for its wellbeing. The stomach, constantly supplied with fresh material, passes on its previous contents only half prepared, thereby irritating the bowels and bringing on a diarrhoea, soon followed by death.

Fijian ignorance is not now nearly so dense as it was. England has given Fiji a good deal of knowledge, all more or less useful; but she has not taught her the duties of a nurse; she has not initiated her into the mysteries of that nurse's bottle: and this is the more extraordinary since it is to that benign functionary and her life-giving implement Queen Victoria owes the existence of fully one-third of her purely English subjects themselves.

Here, by changing this state of the case, a good deal of good can be done.

Let the Government doctors—I beg their pardon, medical officers—prepare a short impressive chapter on the duties of a nurse—their vital importance—and how to discharge them properly. Let them learn from persons who know—(there are such persons, notably the Gilbert Islanders)—how to best fill and use the Fiji bottle with ingredients and means at every Fiji mother's command, but now unknown to her. Let them pen concise, plain directions on this head. This having been done, let the Government insist that the missions, hitherto only intent on saving the souls of a man's family, shall take a turn at saving their bodies. Let each Fiji teacher, under penalty, every Sunday, and to his full congregation, supplement the chapter from the Bible read for the one purpose by that chapter from *Na Mata* devoted to the other. Then the Fiji mother will have a fair chance of rearing her infant if she wants to do so. But does she want to do so? Which brings me to the third cause,—Apathy.

Man, except in his maturity, is always in want of protection. His old age is fully as helpless as his infancy. The father's hand opposes bravely to his children's enemies that shield under which, when time transfers it to theirs, he will find shelter from his own. The birth of a man-child has always caused joy to the household. His advent in savage tribes promises for his parents a protection which will soon become indispensable. Men must have mothers, and the birth of a girl provides one for the future descendant, who will take up his place as a warrior in his turn. This occurs in every class of society, to the savage and to the civilised man alike, and to both the birth and wellbeing of children after them are of the greatest importance. Now, the position of the Fijian is peculiar; he is neither savage nor civilised. Protected by English power from the open and palpable evils of his former savage state, he fails to perceive that civilisation has dangers quite as serious if not so evident. Confident, that now the hostile murderer is effectually restrained, he does not think it necessary to protect his old age from evils of whose existence he is unaware, and which, in fact, it would be extremely difficult to make clear to his apprehension. *Carpe diem* is his motto. An injunction he thinks he will now be able to carry out fully and joyously on this and on every future day.

Really, when you come to think of it, there is hardly any reason, beyond natural affection for their children, why a Fiji couple only moderately fond of each other should have any at all. And, since their breeding has diminished that affection most woefully, that is the conclusion most Fiji couples seem to have come to.

The death of a child excites but little grief since it entails no actual loss on them, while the rearing of one causes a vast deal of care and trouble that promises no advantage that they can see.

The remedy for this is exceedingly simple. Make it their evident interest to rear their children, and depend upon it, if human nature is human nature, their children will be reared.

The Government is the best judge of how this can be best done. I think the following plan, while far from perfect, presents some advantages:—

Let a number of medals or badges, conspicuous and by preference ornamental, be prepared. Let them be conferred with considerable ceremony, and command, under penalty, wherever seen, whether worn or not, the *Tama* (perhaps in a modified form) now exacted by chiefs. Let the recipients be women of good moral character, who have never been convicted of any crime, nor divorced from a husband—the mothers of a given number of living children: that number to be above the average determined by the statistics as proper to each marriage. Let the mother in Fiji, while she retains her medal, receive the honours accorded formerly to the mothers in Israel. Let her release her husband from his taxes, her husband and her sons from the chief's *tala* for either private or public work or contribution of food. Let the death of a child, except by unavoidable accident, recall her medal till another is born (deaths after 21 not to have this effect). Let a conviction of crime on her own part, or on that of any member of her family, have the same effect; the period of recall to be proportionate to that offence; while fornication or adultery either on her own part or on theirs should deprive her of it altogether. Let

this

this recall of her privileges take place in open court. Let a chapter be held each year in each district to ascertain the claims and to celebrate the investiture of its new mothers.

I think great good would arise from some scheme of this sort, more or less similar. The couple's interest would be distinctly involved in the welfare of their children—the husband's in that of his wife. She would no longer be condemned to severe labour, because it impaired her maternity and thereby delayed or imperiled her possession of her medal. The ease and consideration enjoyed by her family while she retained her medal would cause them to avoid crimes they now commit without hesitation, since they are not followed by any really serious loss of either.

From this class it would be easy to select the yeomanry mentioned in my article, "Fresh Fields and Pastures New," should the establishment of that scheme meet with approval. While that system was applying the ultimate remedy, I think, requisite for the primary cause of the evil case of the breed—increasing their power of living, slowly indeed, but, I think, effectually—this one applied to the proximate cause would prevent them *all* dying before they can be dealt with—might, in fact, prove so effective that further and more radical measures would not be needful.

No. 13.

R. Morel, Esq., Planter, Navua, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Navua, 22 February, 1892.

In accordance with His Excellency's desire to have the opinion of various settlers as to the causes of the Decrease of Native Population; having had very little intercourse with them, and knowing but little of their habits and customs, I can throw but little light upon this most important subject. On my arrival in Fiji, some 20 years ago, it struck me that the natives were very numerous, happy, and contented, with a super-abundance of native food, poultry, fish, &c. Immense quantities of taro, yams, &c., were sold to the settlers for little or nothing.

The measles epidemic was the commencement of a rapid decrease, which has continued ever since. Influenza, dengue fever, and other complaints are very fatal to them. Not knowing the treatment required, they hasten by cold-water bathing to allay the fever, and bring about fatal results. The abuse of clothes is another cause of mortality. I have seen them at noon, on a very hot day, wearing flannel shirt, coat, &c., and sitting in the evening without any shirt on, enjoying the cool night-breeze. When I have remonstrated with them on this indiscretion, my answer was, *Kai Viti lialia!* They require better sanitary arrangements in their towns, raised beds, &c. Every encouragement should be given to early marriages. This would prevent a great deal of vice. The many obstacles to young men getting married at present renders the matter quite a difficulty.

Natives should be allowed to remain in their homes nine months in the year to look after their own interests, to plant coffee, &c., according to their bent, all of which they could readily dispose of to the settlers. The Rokos require too much of their time; and in many towns they are badly off for food, and are nearly always away from their homes.

I have, &c.

R. MOREL.

No. 14.

Sydney F. Marriott, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Ba, and Resident Commissioner of Colo West to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Namosau, Ba, 21 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular, inviting an expression of my views respecting the Decrease of the Native Population of Fiji.

2. I must preface my remarks by saying that my experience of the conditions under which natives live is confined to the western half and centre of this island; and, although I have reason to believe that these conditions do not differ to any great extent from those in other parts, my remarks must be held to apply only to that portion of the group in which I have for the most part lived since I came to Fiji.

3. It is difficult to say how far the nature of Fijians differs from that of other human beings; but there appears to be no reasons for believing that at the present time, at any rate, the conditions of life which would cause an excessive mortality amongst any ordinarily constituted infants, would not have the same effect on Fijian infants, and I believe that, if strong and healthy women and children of any race were placed under similar circumstances and subjected to the same treatment as Fijian women and children, that the mortality amongst the children of such other races would be as great as amongst those of the Fijians.

4. The following are, I believe, the chief causes of the phenomenal rate of mortality amongst infant Fijians:—

- (1) Insufficient care being taken of them;
- (2) The bad condition of the houses in which they are brought up;
- (3) Entire absence of proper food, excepting that obtained from the mother;
- (4) The mothers having to do too heavy work both before and after their confinement.

5. The children sleep with their mothers at night in closed, hot, smoky, dirty houses with nothing between them and the earth, which is always more or less damp, but a mat or two and some grass which is generally half-rotten and half-musty. In the morning the mother frequently has to leave her child to attend to her household duties, sometimes having to go a long distance to fetch food from the gardens, and the child is left lying on the ground with little or nothing on, in a draught.

6. There is no proper substitute for the mother's milk at times when she should not or cannot suckle her child. If the mother is suffering from any ailment, &c., she takes medicine, she continues to suckle the child; and if from weakness or any other cause she is unable to do this, the child is given slops of breadfruit or *kawai*, unless there happens to be another woman who is willing and able to suckle it. Long after the time when the child should be weaned and fed on cow's or goat's milk and other nourishing food, the mothers continue to suckle their children and give them vegetables.

7. As to remedies, it is easy to define them:—Improved dwellings, exemption of the mothers from heavy work, and a supply of milk and other proper food for children—but, owing to the inactivity and apathy of the natives themselves, it is doubtful whether they can be called practicable. To provide them would involve great changes in native mode of life, which can only be brought about very gradually. Steps in this direction have already been taken, and more could be taken, and with better results, if only the native chiefs and officials could be brought to take a little more interest in the welfare of their people, and by their personal influence assist the Government to effectually carry out the measures instituted for their benefit.

I have, &c.,
S. F. MARRIOTT.

No. 15.

Jasper W. Browne, Esq., Planter, Rewa, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Vakabalea, 23 February, 1892.

I am in receipt of your favour of 3rd February, and I note contents. You invite my opinion as to the cause of Decrease of the Native Population, and I will do my best to give you my reasons.

1. The towns are built on the same places as they were in olden times, with all the war-ditches around them, which were then kept in order. Now they are full of all kinds of rubbish, and always bad smell coming from them.

2. The pigs which are generally found in the towns do not add to health.

3. They have almost done away with sleeping by fires as they used to do. Mosquito curtains have taken their place, and in consequence they are now sleeping on damp ground and breathing damp air.

4. They are very irregular in eating and sleeping; very seldom have a warm breakfast before going out to work.

5. No judgment is used in clothing. They often wear thick clothes of a hot day, and none at all on a cold one.

6. Marriages are very uncommon: which is brought about through following out their old customs of buying their wives, or next door to it. I have known engagements to last for years, and at last have not taken place through the man not being able to get sufficient goods to give the girl's people.

7. No care is taken of their sick. It is more by good luck than good management they ever recover. A great number die of worms. I have saved several by giving them worm-powders. I remember one case of a boy who often used to be about our place, after taking a powder which I gave him having fourteen worms come from him—from three to six inches in length.

And trusting the above will be of service,

I have, &c.,
JASPER W. BROWNE.

No. 16.

Francis Joseph Pound, Esq., District Medical Officer, Ba, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Namosau, Ba, 19 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the Circular, 280-1892, in which His Excellency invites an expression of opinion as to the abnormal mortality among Fijian children under one year of age, particularly as to the predisposing causes and the remedies.

2. In endeavouring to point out what I consider some of the predisposing causes of this mortality, I must be understood to refer chiefly to the Ba and neighbouring districts where I have had many opportunities, for over four years, of observing native character, habits, and customs. At the same time, from experience gained in the more windward parts of the group during my first five years of residence, I am led to suppose my remarks will apply more or less nearly to them also.

3. *Causes* :—

(a) The condition of women, especially mothers;

(b) The disease known as *coko* or yaws, and its effect on the health of young children;

(c) Insanitary condition of towns and houses.

(a) I think one of the customs of the people that is most fatal to infants is the drudgery and hard work that is enforced from the women. No child can thrive when its mother is overworked. Yet it is a fact that, no sooner does a woman marry than she becomes her husband's slave in all but name—having, for instance, to trudge to the yam-patch, dig and carry home the yams, or any other labour incurred in the supply of food for the domestic wants, as well as all the necessary firewood. Not only this: she not only keeps her own home supplied, but if she happens to live in the neighbourhood of a chief she is in frequent demand, to be sent with other women on wholesale expeditions of this kind. Nor does the number of children a woman may have, nor her age (within extreme limits) influence her condition

condition in this respect—rather to her disadvantage if it does ; because under her gradually accumulating burdens, *i.e.*, children, hard work, and advancing age, she becomes less attractive, and consequently less a matter of consideration to her oppressors.

With this may well be noticed the fact that Fijian young women avoid marriage as long as they possibly can ; because they are quite aware they leave most of the pleasures of life behind when once they are under contract, and have to look forward to a much harder life and to early decrepitude. Again, marriage is avoided as long as possible by young girls because they can rarely choose as they like, and have to marry men considerably older than themselves who have influence enough to secure the consent of the existing authorities. This leads to secret intercourse with the younger men, both before and after marriage, and necessitates many injurious practices to hide and suppress the consequences.

(*b*) This disease—*coko* or yaws—is, I believe, directly or indirectly the cause of death of many native children. Indeed, if a child acquires the disease before it has attained its first year, it appears to be almost always fatal. Fortunately the disease makes its appearance more often in the second year ; and is then allowed to run its filthy course without any attempt at cure or alleviation. In this way most of the children in Fijian villages, whose ages range from two to six years will be seen running about covered with this disease, dirt, and flies. No wonder they are weak and anæmic and liable to develop other disease.

(*c*) Insanitary towns and houses. In most Fijian villages, and, indeed, it may be said of all if they are closely examined, the sanitary condition is as bad as bad can be. Any refuse that has to be got rid of is merely thrown outside the door where it is presently accounted for by the pigs—which filthy scavengers (invariably diseased) are, later on, eaten by the people, but not before they have rendered the town into the condition of a pig-sty. On close investigation it will be found that the houses are damp, filthy, and full of vermin, and are obviously ill-ventilated.

4. I think that the conditions under which the mothers and the children exist, the scourge of yaws, and the insanitary conditions—all three combined—besides other evils too numerous to mention—are enough to be fatal to most of the children.

5. *The remedies :—*

For the causes *a* and *c* the remedies are obvious, though, perhaps, somewhat difficult to effect. For the cause *b* much could be done by the European Medical Officers through the native practitioners, if in some way or other the people could be induced to modify their prejudicial and superstitious ideas regarding the treatment of the disease ; and a closer attention to sanitary laws would greatly assist medical treatment.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS J. POUND.

No. 17.

Robert Malcolm Booth, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Tailevu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Namena, Tailevu, 26 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular letter of the 30th December last, relative to Native Mortality.

2. For some time past I have considered the subject of infant mortality, and I now reply with much diffidence to the two questions. (1) What are the predisposing causes of this mortality ? and (2) what remedies are practicable ?

3. I would attribute this abnormal mortality among infants to the following causes :—

- (*a*) To the disease known as *coko* ;
- (*b*) Villages unhealthily situated and badly drained ;
- (*c*) Mothers not taking care of themselves before and after confinement. Before confinement, carrying heavy loads, cutting firewood, and other heavy work. After confinement, irregular and unwholesome diet, smoking, and drinking yaqona, sea-fishing, performing heavy work ;
- (*d*) Mothers not giving sufficient attention to their infants.

4. The remedies practicable are as follows :—

- (*a*) Every Turaga ni koro and Turaga ni mataqali to be informed, for dissemination among their people, that *coko* is not a necessary but a hurtful disease for children to contract—that all children infected should not be allowed to associate with children who are well ;
- (*b*) Villages unhealthily situated to be removed, and all villages to be properly drained ;
- (*c*) Women to be informed of the necessity of taking care of themselves during pregnancy and after confinement, to refrain from carrying heavy loads and doing any heavy work, to eat wholesome food, to look well after their infants ;
- (*d*) Native Regulations No. 4 of 1885, relating to Yaqona Drinking, and No. 7 of 1885, respecting Burdens Carried by Women to be rigorously enforced.

5. I have been told by an intelligent and educated native, that the growing practice of husband and wife cohabiting a month or so after confinement tends to deteriorate the mother's milk, and thereby weakens

weakens the infant. The old custom was for the mother to be left alone until the child could walk well. The same native also informs me that people marry younger now than in the old days—before they are fully developed—and consequently their offspring are weakly.

I have, &c.
R. M. BOOTH.

No. 18.

The Reverend William Weir Lindsay, Wesleyan Missionary, Navuloa Training Institute, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Navuloa, 25 February, 1892.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular letter of 30th December, 1891, *re* Native Infant Mortality.

In reply, I beg to state that it is a subject on which I have during many years residence in the group thoughtfully pondered. I have observed, with increasing concern, the terrible mortality amongst the native children in Fiji. No one can have long resided in these islands and have been brought closely in contact with the Fijians without being deeply impressed with the fact of the great, and, I fear, increasing infant mortality. That it began before the arrival of Christianity I firmly believe, and that it has been increasing even under British rule, is, I fear, sadly, too true.

What then "are the predisposing causes of this mortality"? This seems to me a most difficult matter to determine. No doubt there are a number of evils at work, fatally increasing the risks to which native children are now exposed, and from which the children of one or two generations ago were exempt, to wit, the European diseases now found in the Colony. And in addition to these there are other evils at work, which combined, tend greatly to lessen the chance of the survival of young children. First, perhaps, in importance, is the way in which very young children are physicked by the so-called *alewa vuku* or friends, and the very often severe ordeal the children have to undergo when being *bobo'd*. The parents almost always think when a child becomes sick or loses flesh that it is *ramusu*, and therefore, must be taken to some old woman or *alewa vuku*, who, of course, says the child is *ramusu* and must be *bobo'd* or it will die, and I am convinced that very frequently the child is permanently, if not fatally injured. In addition to this the child is often thought to have something in its throat, and the *alewa vuku* thrusts her finger as far down the poor child's throat as she can get it. But it may be said that this has always been done; probably it has, but not, I am convinced from personal observation and from inquiries amongst the natives, to the extent it is practised at present.

Further, I think mothers cannot now give that attention to their children that they did in former days, owing to so much of their time being taken up making mats, &c., for Boses and Solevus, and to their husbands being so much away from home. Only to-day two women were overheard in a private conversation bitterly complaining about their being kept so busy making mats for the Boses and Solevus. Again there is a great deal more travelling about to Solevus now than in the olden times, and children must consequently suffer somewhat from exposure to inclement weather, &c.; and if the visitors themselves do not suffer from the overcrowding in towns which invariably takes place at such times, the *taukeys* and their children do. For instance, at the present moment there are quite one hundred and fifty persons from Gau solevuing at a town near here. They have been there about a fortnight, and the town must be in such an overcrowded state as to be positively unhealthy; and, in addition to this, there will be a scarcity of good food in that town for a long time to come. Yet, after making allowance for deaths from all these causes, there remains a large percentage for which it is difficult to account.

What remedies are practicable?

I think that the remedial measure lies in the direction I have indicated. If the evils I have referred to were removed, I feel convinced that a very large decrease in infant mortality would take place. Of course, if suitable food could be provided for the little sick ones it would be a great assistance. If, as recommended some years since, it were made compulsory that a sufficient supply of Fijian arrowroot be kept in each town for the sick, and especially for the children, it would be a great improvement. The keeping of cows in each town is impracticable; but I think in most places goats, for milk and food, might be kept.

Praying that His Excellency may be so wisely guided as to devise some means by which this terrible infant mortality may be stayed,

I have, &c.,
WM. WEIR LINDSAY.

No. 19.

William Scott, Esq., Barrister and Solicitor, Suva, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva, 29 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Circular, dated December 30th, 1891, in reference to the Decrease of the Native Population throughout the islands of the Pacific—Fiji forming no exception. I have much pleasure in giving His Excellency the Governor the benefit of any suggestions, I am capable of, in regard to this matter. Not being an expert, I can only make such observations, which, from a long residence in Fiji—over 30 years,—may possibly be of some use in directing attention to certain circumstances affecting native races, that can be followed up by those who have more leisure and ability to do so.

1. After a most careful consideration of the habits and customs of the Fijians, and of the universal decadence of the native races in the South Seas, I am of opinion, that the most potent factor is intertribal marriage, or the breeding in-and-in of the people; and the only remedy that has a fair chance of success in counteracting the evil, is a complete reform of the communal system under which the natives have been living for ages.

2. To illustrate my meaning, take the island of Ovalau, with a population of 1,500 to 2,000, divided into three districts, viz.:—Qalivaka Bau, Qalivaka Lovoni, and Qalivaka Levuka; say 600 for each district. Now, these people, as a rule, marry, and always did marry among themselves. It is rare for a Qalivaka Bau man to marry a Levuka woman, or *vice versa*; rarer still for him to seek a wife from the islands of Batiki, Koro, Nairai, or Gau; and almost unknown to go so far a field as Vanualevu or Cakaudrove. Even when a man does marry a woman from a district other than his own, it will be found that they are related (*veivekani*), and this is the cause of their being brought together. It is almost unknown for a native in one district to marry a woman from another district entirely unconnected with his people, the intercourse necessary to facilitate such unions being wholly wanting. The constant breeding in-and-in of these 600, or take the whole island at 1,800, for generations or centuries perhaps, for it is impossible to define with any degree of certainty, must produce a state of decadence, which, in my opinion, fully accounts for the rapid depopulation that we see going on around us now everywhere. These observations are applicable to the whole of Fiji, and to every island in the Pacific.

3. I have no hesitation in expressing an opinion, that polygamy was one of the factors in causing degeneracy of the race, as its tendency undoubtedly would be to increase the evils of breeding in-and-in; and operating for ages, produced such a state, that the benefits arising from its abolition are scarcely appreciable, and insufficient of itself to arrest the decay, but its continuation would only have hastened the complete depopulation of the islands.

4. There may be sufficient vitality in the Fijian race—numbering over 100,000 inhabitants—to stem the tide and turn the flow in the other direction by a judicious intermixture of the people, from one end of the group to the other; but I am firmly of opinion, that a perpetuation of the present communal system, which conduces to intertribal marriages, will end sooner or later in total extinction.

5. It is doubtful whether Samoa or Tonga could, under any circumstances, arrest their downward tendency by a thorough breaking up of their tribal distinctions, without the introduction of a foreign element.

6. But in regard to Rotumah, I venture to assert, that nothing will arrest the decadence of the people, unless supplemented by immigration, and even this remedy might be now too late. In a comparatively brief period they will be extinct. The following statistics that I have been able to gather fully prove this, although they may not be wholly trustworthy in detail, yet the conclusions are correct; besides, there is a consensus of opinion that Rotumah is rapidly becoming depopulated:—

Year.	Total Population.	Births.	Deaths.	Decrease.	Ratio per 1,000.
1883	2,450	107	93	.....	53·06
1884	2,414	94	130	36	
1885	2,361	65	118	53	
1886	.....	67	107	47	
1887	2,303	88	106	18	48·47
1888	2,285	93	111	18	
1889	2,295	67	115	48	50·00
1890	.....	.....	.....	.....	55·43
1891	2,219	97	123	26	

7. The mean annual death-rate of the colonies per 1,000 of population ranged from 11·71 New Zealand to 17·69 Queensland from the year 1865 to 1889; of England for 5 years ending 1888, 17·8; of Dominica, 17·3 in 1882–3; of Jamaica, 1883 to 1887, 22·9; of Barbadoes, 1886, 25·7; of Antigua, 1883–4, 39·5. The population of Rotumah in 1883 was 2,450, from which deduct the number of last census, April 1891, 2,219, leaves 231 plus 26 increase of deaths over births for the three quarters ending December 31st, 1891, and we have a total number of 257 deaths over births for the past nine years. Can anything be more significant? Out of a population of 2,450, here is an actual loss of over 10 per cent for 9 years.

8. Tonga and Samoa are placed in precisely the same conditions, only on a larger scale, and their decay has not arrived at such a measureable distance of the end that is so apparent at Rotumah. The various reasons put forth in explanation of the high death-rate of the Fijian race (which I do not agree with), cannot apply to the Rotumahans. Mr. Gordon, a late Commissioner to Rotumah says, “As to the extraordinary fertility of the soil, no island or district in the Fiji Group can for a moment be compared to it,” and “with regard to the material comforts of life, the people of Rotumah are exceptionally well off. Food trees of all kinds grow profusely and luxuriantly everywhere. All the ordinary root crops of the Pacific Islands are commonly cultivated. Nearly every household can obtain sufficient money by the sale of copra to buy such necessities as soap, kerosene, matches, clothes, &c., while many now use tea and sugar as well as tinned provisions.”

9. One reason certainly does not exist, and that is the work assigned to women; for Mr. Gordon says, “that the women have a far higher position in the social scale than in Fiji. They do not assist in any way in planting food, nor do they ever do any cooking, their sole occupation being fishing and plaiting mats. That they do no manual labour as in Fiji, and are therefore able to attend better to their

their children during their infancy ; ” and he says, “ disease is very prevalent in various forms, the most common being that of scrofulous sores, from which a very considerable percentage of people suffer,—inflammation of the eyes, rheumatism often accompanied by swellings in various parts of the body, diarrhœa, dysentery, low fever with headaches, and elephantiasis.” Why should all this sickness exist in such a beautiful and healthy island, with plenty of food ? To what cause can this decay be attributed except to the one I have named ? They have no stamina left to resist an epidemic of the mildest character, or of the least dangerous of diseases. Their vitality is gone.

10. The population of Fiji in April, 1881, was	...	...	114,748
In April, 1891, it was	...	...	105,800

Number of deaths over births for a period of ten years 8,948
or 7·78 per 1,000 absolute loss of population for one decade.

11. The ratio of deaths per 1,000 during the past eleven years is as under :—

1880	...	...	...	34·24
1881	...	...	...	34·35
1882	...	...	...	36·26
1883	...	...	...	38·18
1884	...	...	...	60·12
1885	...	...	...	44·15
1886	...	...	...	44·45
1887	...	...	...	36·07
1888	...	...	...	34·39
1889	...	...	...	40·61
1890	...	...	...	33·65

This shows a marked increase in the ratio from 34·24 in 1880 to 40·61 in 1889. I do not consider the figures for 1890 reliable, inasmuch as they are based on a population of 110,528 in December, 1890, whereas in April, 1891 (when the Census was taken), the total number was 105,800 only. Calculating from 1880 to 1889 inclusive, we have an annual average for 10 years of 40·36 deaths per 1,000.

12. The extreme mortality in 1884, 1885, and 1886, has been attributed to epidemics of diseases not considered dangerous amongst Europeans. These have to be reckoned with in the future, and the depressed vitality of the race renders them unable to contend with such diseases and they succumb, when other races of more vitality conquer without extra care. Therefore, it is not a far-fetched deduction to assert that without any violent epidemics such as the measles, which took off about one-third of the population, there will be very few Fijians alive in 50 years hence. Nature cannot stand still. There must be either progression or stagnation ; and the latter leads very quickly to deterioration and decay.

13. I am fully convinced that the area of selecting partners is now more circumscribed than it was formerly, and becoming more so ; consequently the ratio of the downward tendency of the race will increase in momentum as the end draws nearer. Measures of amelioration, sanitary and otherwise, may retard the downward progress, but cannot arrest it, unless a drastic reform is made on the lines above indicated.

14. The mortality of infants, being an annual average of 44·40 per 100 of births for the period of 6½ years ending 31st December, 1887, is startling in the extreme when contrasted with the mean rate in England of 14·40 for the past 10 years. Possibly, this extreme mortality may be caused to some extent by the unhealthiness of the village sites in which the natives dwell, coupled with a want of sanitary knowledge. I do not think that since Annexation, sufficient attention has been paid to the advisability of removing the majority of the villages from their old sites to higher and drier places. Living from generation to generation in the same low spot—where stagnant water abounds, and in many cases, filthy in the extreme from the number of pigs kept, and, where there are no pigs, middens accumulate,—the refuse of the kitchen for ages—has a very deleterious effect upon the human system, and causes the ordinary vitality to be lowered.

14. About 10 years ago, when at Ba, I was much struck with the clean and healthy appearance of the village of Nailaga, situated on the Ba River. The houses seemed to be laid out on a system, in lines, and between the lines open spaces, which might be fairly termed streets. There was any amount of level spaces for extension, and it had good drainage. The inhabitants, I believe, were formerly of Sagunu. This village could easily have absorbed half-a-dozen small ones that were then in existence, situated lower down the river at its several openings near the sea. It occurred to me that these villages were very unhealthy from the stagnant water surrounding them. It would be interesting to know from the statistics the death-rate of Nailaga, whether considerably lower or not than in the other less favoured villages.

16. I am of opinion, that serious efforts should be made to remove all villages of long standing, and swampy, to new sites, entirely away from the poisonous influence of the old sites ; and that the natives should be encouraged to congregate in large villages laid out on a proper system. Houses to be a reasonable distance from each other, and nothing taller than couch grass should be allowed to grow within thirty yards of the precincts, excepting fruit or shade trees, so as to ensure thorough ventilation. To allow natives to live in villages of a few inhabitants is, in my opinion, pernicious in the extreme, for the following reasons :—

- (a) Their choice in marriage is limited, and although they could go further afield, they get into the habit of marrying their most intimate acquaintances. These, perhaps, may not be blood-relations to the knowledge of the parties concerned yet they unquestionably are connected ; and this system intensifies the evils herein pointed out, the baneful effects of which, in undermining the stamina of the race, goes without saying ;

(b)

- (b) The inhabitants are under no proper control as they would be under the direct eye of a chief of commanding influence, the want of which conduces to early immorality ;
- (c) The smaller the village, as a rule the more unhealthy from causes already mentioned in paragraph 14 ;
- (d) A proper system of sanitation would have some prospect of succeeding where there were numbers, but none where only a few families reside ;
- (e) Isolation produces laziness, depression, and complete indifference to their own well-being ; and emulation becomes dormant, if not extinguished ;
- (f) Less school facilities exist, and their teacher is little above themselves ; whereas in a large village, the teacher is invariably a man of superior intelligence, whose daily influence is for good ;
- (g) The healthy stimulant of rivalry and excitement is wholly wanting, both of which are a necessity, not only for progress, but for preservation ; and greatly needed since the advent of the missionaries, and the Annexation to Great Britain, as a substitute for the life of activity and pride in which the native gloried when at war, or intriguing for war, in their earlier times ;
- (h) A large village is more easily visited by the Governor, and the superior officers of the Government, as well as by the European missionaries. More frequent these visits are, the better for the people.

17. Most valuable deductions can be drawn from the able Minute of Mr. Stewart, the Assistant Colonial Secretary, dated September 6th, 1888, in confirmation of my views. It must be borne in mind that fecundity is not vitality. The high birth-rate obtaining throughout the Colony is perfectly consistent with my views, while the excessive death-rate of children under one year—the increasing ratio of deaths per 1,000 of the population of all ages—the death-rate of females being in excess of the males, while the birth-rate is lower,—all tending to swell the disproportion of the sexes,—proves unmistakably a diminished vitality of the race.

18. In regard to the causes assigned by native and other authorities, mentioned in Mr. Stewart's Minute, page 32, for the great infantile death-rate during the past years, I wholly dissent. A mother may forget her child, but surely the mothers of the whole Fijian race have not descended so low. Isolated instances of neglect may occur as in all countries, but to say that they wish to have no children ; that they lack a mother's pride in them ; that they despise the weak child ; that they go to work in their gardens leaving their children behind in the village without food or care ; that others take them to the plantations in the cold and wet, are gross calumnies, in support of which I do not see the slightest evidence. The women work no harder than they did formerly. But what about Tonga ! where the women do no work at all, like the Rotumahans already mentioned, and yet are disappearing fast ; and no such reasons as above stated are or can be assigned.

19. Having been informed that the Half-castes and their descendants are increasing in numbers throughout Fiji, I obtained the following statistics from the Office of the Registrar-General :—

Total population in 1881	...	...	...	771
Do. do. 1891	...	...	...	1,076
Total increase for 10 years				305
Rate of births for 1891 per 1,000, is				27·88
Rate of deaths for 1891				8·36

They compare favourably with the whites, who had a birth-rate for the same year, of 26·52 for every 1,000, and a death-rate of 9·82 for every 1,000. This affords a striking exemplification of my contention, and proves the benefit of introducing new blood.

20. I am quite convinced that the Government policy has not the remotest connection with the continual decrease of the population ; nor the so-called missionary monogamy ; nor in mothers having children in too quick succession (*dabe*) ; nor in their contact with the white race. This, I consider, a popular fallacy, having no evidence to support it beyond the mere fact that on becoming acquainted with them the whites find they are decreasing. I agree with Mr. Fison that the Fijians were decreasing in numbers before the earliest white settlers came among them, and for the reasons I have stated, only the ratio of decrease has considerably augmented since then.

21. On looking over the Blue Books in reference to the Fiji natives, I fail to detect the least glimmer of suspicion on the part of any person connected with the Native Department or of the High Officials, that the true cause is, what I have ventured to point out in this communication. They have all been groping in the dark, for causes, while they missed the true cause though as clear as the noon-day sun.

22. Upon a careful inquiry, I think it will be found, that my premises are correct ; and, if that is so, the deductions are sound. The remedy may be difficult, but not impossible. Surely it does not pass the wit of statesmen to bring about a reform of the tribal customs of the natives, with a view to their preservation. I am firmly of opinion that, when the cause of their decrease is brought to the notice of the chiefs, they will see its reasonableness, and will heartily co-operate in any measures taken to prevent such a catastrophe as their total extinction. They are fully aware of the prospect, and are by no means indifferent to the consequences, though the end may seem far off just now.

23. Should these views commend themselves to His Excellency the Governor as worthy of consideration, I submit that a beginning could be made without much loss of time, by initiating the reforms suggested in paragraph 18 as a preliminary. This would pave the way gradually for a more extended intercourse of the people. It will necessarily be a matter of very slow growth, needing the hearty and intelligent co-operation of all well-wishers of the race. Prejudices have to be overcome, and constant exhortation to the people from those in whom they have confidence will be imperative, in order to educate and convince them of the necessity of a thorough alteration in their present environments.

24. Sanitary measures I advocate at all times, and to all people; a want of which can only be characterised as bad government; but these and all other remedies which have been suggested, such as the cow (whether the proverbial three acres is to accompany it is not stated), use of arrowroot, the planting of more taro, and various other suggestions, without a radical reform of the intertribal marriage system, I can only compare to an attempt to bale out a sinking ship with a tumbler, while, at the same time, no effort is made to stop the leaks which rush in by bucketsful.

I have, &c.,
WM. SCOTT.

[Further Communication.]

Sir,

Eldon Chambers, Suva, 14 June, 1892.

I have the honour to enclose an extract taken from the Administrative Report of the Andaman Islands for the past official year, recently published in Calcutta, and which appeared in the *London Mail* of the 18th of April last, wherein it appears that the aborigines termed "the great Andaman tribe" are almost extinct.

I wish to call the Governor's attention, specially to the last paragraph, in support of my views on this subject already communicated to you.—The first part to prove that isolation eventuates in total extinction, and the latter part as showing the fallacy, commonly entertained, of supposing that contact with external civilisation is the cause of the deterioration of uncivilised races. We (in which I include His Excellency) who have had considerable experience amongst the Pacific Islanders, know that this is altogether contrary to fact.

I have, &c.,
WM. SCOTT.

[Enclosure.]

THE EXTINCTION OF THE ANDAMAN ISLANDERS.

FROM the administrative report of the Andaman Islands for the past official year, which has recently been issued in Calcutta, it appears that the aborigines of the archipelago are disappearing so rapidly that Mr. Portman states the present generation may be considered as the last of the great Andaman tribe. All the people of Rutland Island and Port Campbell are now dead, and very few remain in the South Andamans. Apart from the mortality from infectious diseases, it is said that the few children who are now born do not survive. Mr. Portman is endeavouring to keep the tribe alive as long as possible, and he is collecting all the children at his house, where they are well fed and cared for: but this can only postpone for a short time the extinction of the race. For many centuries the people lived completely isolated from the rest of the world, but, like the Pacific islanders, they seem unable to withstand contact with external civilisation.

No. 20.

The Reverend H. Worrall, Wesleyan Missionary, Rewa, to His Excellency the Governor.

Sir,

Rewa, 27 February, 1892.

In reply to Your Excellency's recent Circular in *re* the alarming Decrease of the Native Population, I wish to say the subject opens up a very wide field of speculation. How to meet the difficulty is, I think, a problem not to be solved by the mere study of those elements which bear upon the sociology of more advanced and older races. If we are to arrive at a proper solution of the problem, it must be by an investigation which shall cover the whole ground of the political, social, and religious life of the race.

Your Excellency has referred to the fact that infant mortality is very great. This is indeed a very serious matter, but not the only serious matter that bears heavily upon the subject of Vital Statistics in Fiji.

As the missionary in charge of the largest circuit in Fiji, I am brought into contact with more than 28,000 natives—nearly one-fourth of the population of the whole group,—so in considering the environments of these, I am probably considering what fairly applies to the whole race. I say without doubt that the most alarming factor in the sum total of the problem before us, is the rapid increase of immorality. It is also impossible for me not to recognise the very alarming fact that a large percentage of this evil is to be laid to the charge of high chiefs, some of whom hold responsible positions in the Government. I believe that the majority of high chiefs are men, who by no means obey those laws of chastity, obedience to which would in my opinion, make a very perceptible difference to the Vital Statistics of the country. Immorality—so the history of nations declares—has always militated against the best interests of the human race. Since the abolition of *club law*, immorality has increased alarmingly. While I do not for a moment wish to imply that I advocate the re-establishment of this summary form of punishment, I do sincerely and respectfully advocate a more general application of the law to prevent the development of what I believe to be the most serious evil that the Government can legislate upon. Sheep-like the race follows whoever leads, be the leadership good or bad; thus unjust and unchaste chiefs may, and actually do, work unlimited evil to their provinces. But the evil is so apparent that I need only mention it to expose it.

In comparison with the adult population, marriages are far from being numerous. This is partly owing to what I have already stated in *re* immorality, and to the fact that frequently marriages, the eligibility of which cannot be questioned, are thwarted by the opposition and interference of chiefs and *matagalis*.

There

There is little or no *home life* in Fiji, simply because the communism of the race is diametrically opposed to its development.

To limit the number of her children, to escape the pain of child-birth, or to vex an unloved husband, a Fijian wife has recourse to methods of procuring abortion. It is by no means an obscure fact that native women use decoctions which not only procure abortion, but which, so it is asserted, prevent the probability of subsequent conception. A native colleague recently reported that in a certain Colo town all the married women had been declared guilty of drinking the *wai ni vakalutu*. Although I have never before heard of such a wholesale consumption of this article, I yet have reason to believe that it is very often used. I believe that these drugs do not always destroy the fœtus, but so injure it, that the child comes into existence doomed to an early grave by prenatal maltreatment.

There are too many disgusting methods—relics of old heathen times—practised by the *buinigone* on pregnant women, who are only suffering from slight ailments incidental to their condition.

The well-known custom of taking women “to the water,” where they stand hip-deep to be cruelly and injuriously manipulated by the native midwife, is the frequent cause of abortion or serious vaginal complications.

The sanitary conditions of most Fijian towns are vile in the extreme. With a filthy pig-sty within a few feet of the sleeping-place of young children, I do not wonder that there are so many examples of *entozoa*. The manner of keeping swine in most native towns is an unutterable abomination.

The bodies of still-born children are invariably kept within the house for several days before burial. The people believe that the immediate burial of the child would retard the recovery of the mother, and so the body is allowed to lie in an ill-ventilated house, throwing off by the process of decomposition organisms that must seriously injure the health of the whole household.

The custom of keeping the mother and child after confinement for a very lengthy period within the house—often, indeed, within a close mosquito-screen, cannot facilitate either the recovery of the mother or the growth of the child. Native women stand sadly in need of instruction in these matters. The average *buinigone*, is, I believe, an unmitigated evil. It would be an immense boon to the country if a few intelligent women in each province could be taught the elements of obstetric nursing.

With the earnest wish that Your Excellency’s endeavour to conserve and develop the best interests of the race may meet with abundant success,

I have, &c.,

H. WORRALL.

No. 21.

Philip Samuel Solomon, Esq., Q.C., Suva, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva, 29 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a Circular from the Colonial Secretary’s Office, dated 30th December, 1891, by which I am invited to give an expression of my views in respect to the rapid decline in numbers of the population of Fiji.

2. Although the words of the circular do not invite this in terms, I gather, from its first nine paragraphs, that that is really the purport of the invitation.

3. I agree very thoroughly with so much of the remark in the eighth paragraph of that document, which states, that “It would almost appear, *therefore*, that the cause of the decadence of race is attributable * * * to evils existing in the social and domestic life of the people.”

Paragraphs 2-9.

4. I italicise the word “*therefore*,” in order that I may refer to so much of the antecedent paragraphs as deals with decrease perceptible in other places. The fact that Fiji forms no exception to the decadence of races in New Zealand, Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and Hawaii is due, I think, to the fact that such decadence is to be traced to a common cause. That cause is, in my opinion, the interference with the life of the people as that was known prior to the introduction of a system which, however meritorious amongst civilised nations, and however highly to be regarded from a religious point of view, has had the effect of causing a diminution of numbers. That the logical end of this must be the sweeping off the face of the earth of the nations mentioned, is made so self-evident by the facts admitted in the paragraph quoted that further reference thereto were supererogatory, at least at this stage of my observations.

Paragraph 10.

5. Entertaining that view, it were needless to state that the fact of mortality having been severe during the period antecedent to the date of the Cession of the Colony, and that that was within the knowledge of the elder missionaries and other residents, is to be accounted for, I think, and so far as its application is concerned, by the causes referred to in the last preceding paragraph.

Paragraph 11.

6. With respect to paragraph 11 and the quotation it contains, I have the honour to remark that matters have so far changed since 1867, when, as is to be gathered from that paragraph, the failure was in the birth-rate—but fourteen births being registered in three places named as against 139 deaths—that the number of births now exceeds that of the deaths.

7. The same observation applies to the conclusions arrived at by the Rev. Lorimer Fison, as quoted in the twelfth paragraph of the extract published from a writing of his, stated to have been furnished in 1881, in which he declares that during the whole period (1868-9) his weekly returns showed the deaths to be almost invariably in excess of the births. The births for 1887 were 4,425; the deaths, 3,980; thus showing a preponderance of the former over the latter of 445.

I would here observe that, although the return of population, as ascertained at the Census of 5th April, 1891, does not include particulars of births or deaths among the Fijians, a memorandum of the population of the Colony, published in the *Fiji Times* of 3rd October, shows a material decrease when compared with the Census returns of 1881. It is placed at 8,948, but its accuracy is challenged in the belief

belief that the returns last referred to are erroneous. I note, however, that the number above stated is accepted as correct in the thirteenth paragraph of the circular.

8. Coming to the average birth and death rate among the native population, to be gathered from the *resumé* of September, 1888, it is found, as before observed, that the births in 1887 were 445 in excess of the deaths. But that for the period of $6\frac{3}{4}$ years ending 31st December, 1887, the deaths of children under one year of age reached 44 per cent. A rate appalling enough in itself; but rendered more so when compared with the high birth-rate; one which contrasts most favourably with that of other countries.

9. This being so, I proceed to address myself to an endeavour to reply to the first question addressed in the circular—"What are the predisposing causes of this mortality?"

10. I refer in this connection to the opinions of those well qualified to speak on the subject. I, therefore do myself the honour to call attention to the following extracts, full details of which will be found in the appendices attached:—

A.

Report of Commission on Native Population, &c., dated 10th March, 1879.

"We are satisfied that in many districts children do not receive a sufficient amount of attention. We had frequent opportunity, from personal observation, of seeing that the mother goes out to the field to plant or to carry in food, and very frequently takes the child with her, 'until,' as Buli Namata said, 'the child is old enough to be left at home with the father.' This is a state of matters that from the peculiar constitution of society formerly existing in Fiji, can be rectified only by degrees; but it is so very important, that no opportunity should be lost in discouraging women with young children from doing field work and from carrying home the food and firewood of the household, and in urging on husbands and fathers not to call upon or permit women to perform such work."

B.

Report, dated March 18th, 1885, by Secretary of Native Affairs, on Vital Statistics of the Native Population for 1884.

"* * * Though I am by no means sure but that a very great number of deaths arise also from ordinary causes, such as inattention to the very young children and carelessness in sickness generally."

C.

Despatch, dated April 10th, 1885.—Administrator Wm. McGregor, C.M.G., to The Right Honourable the Earl of Derby, K.G.

"* * * But unless a race makes a distinct gain in years in which there are no epidemics, its extinction can only be a question of time."

D.

Opening speech of His Honour the Administrator at Annual Meeting of Chiefs held at Tavuki, Kadavu, May 4th, 1885.

"Re neglect of women, children, and the sick.

"* * * In one of your former Councils, a Buli, when asked how it was that the population was increasing so fast in his district, replied, 'Perhaps it is because no woman is allowed to stir about for three weeks after giving birth to a child, nor until the chief of the town has seen that both mother and child are strong.' How many of you have followed the wise example of Buli Bouboucou in this? * * * The truth is, that you chiefs were reared by women that were well fed, that were kept comfortable, and had nothing to do except to care for you. * * * But if a mother has rest, a dry comfortable house, and an abundance of good food, the produce of the land, she can nourish her child herself until it is able to eat."

E.

Report, dated 16th June, 1886, by Secretary for Native Affairs, on Vital Statistics of the Native Population for year 1885.

"The birth-rate is high and has been increasing steadily. The death-rate for young children is also high and is general everywhere. I respectfully submit, however, that there are causes at work to produce this high death-rate which are not natural, and these causes spring from the strain above mentioned. ('The sudden change to monogamy and a system of morality foreign to their policy was a great check to, and a strong strain on, the race.')

"There can be no doubt that the native women use native drugs, the effect of which they believe is to counteract the laws of nature in child-bearing and child-rearing. In some the intention is * * * to produce a child that will not live."

F.

Minute, dated 1st July, 1886, by Chief Medical Officer, on Report by Secretary for Native Affairs.

"In Fiji, 36.6 per centum of all deaths took place under one year of age. * * * Of the deaths in Fiji under one year, three-sevenths took place during the first month. It is to the care and treatment therefore of young children that attention requires to be directed, * * * and there is a permanent cause. The mother's time is not devoted so much to the child as it ought to be, especially during the first year."

G.

Despatch, dated October 21st, 1886.—Administrator J. B. Thurston, C.M.G., to The Right Honourable E. Stanhope, M.P.

"* * * The evil is that children are not reared. Nearly 37 per cent. of them, as before said, die before reaching the age of one year. * * *

"The wife has now to work at all times for her husband. She has, so she says, no rest, and that which she hates still more than work is the advances of her spouse, whether while 'enciente' or nursing. The man abhors being tied to one woman, who in conformity with native ideas, is at times unclean, no less than she does. To both parties the idea is as repugnant as it can possibly be conceived. If the man's advances are, however, persistent, the woman neglects her child, and says the husband is killing it. Natives will slowly adapt themselves to their new surroundings, though many must succumb in the process. Every effort should, in my opinion, be made to raise the status of Native women. This I regard as essential to any possibility of moral improvement in the relations of the sexes. The effort needs money, and specially selected men—working, not for a year or so, but for two or three generations."

11. There thus appears to be a consensus of opinion as to the necessity to raise the moral status of the woman if the race is to be preserved. How is that to be effected?

12. The idea of re-introducing polygamy must be regarded as beyond the range of possibility. Circumstances have so much changed with the introduction of Christianity, that it must be apparent that any advance in that direction would be repugnant to the sentiment of the great bulk of the people. The discontinuance of the system may be, to some degree, accountable for the decrease in the population; but its re-introduction is not to be thought of.

13. The question then naturally presents itself as to whether any means can be adopted, whereby some of the results of that condition of society can be reproduced without recurrence to that which, originally, was the moving cause to the growth of a sturdy, healthy class.

14. I arrive at the conclusion that such was the case, not from any observations I have been enabled to make personally, but from the deductions to be drawn from the remarks of His Excellency, contained in Appendix G.

15. In order to equalise the changed aspect of affairs induced by the introduction of monogamy, I venture to suggest that the influence which underlies that, should be carried to its legitimate and perfect conclusion. In short, that the woman should be a "help meet" to the man, and not his labourer nor beast of burden. That she should be left free to attend to her domestic duties. Chief among those is the care and tending of her children. She and they should be supported by the labour of the husband and father; and her physical system, not being reduced by work, fair promise would be given that progeny would be reared, healthy in at least the same proportion as is found elsewhere.

16. For corroboration of this opinion, I refer to the lines quoted herein, and to the fuller appendices attached hereto.

17. It is possible that it may be urged as against this, the condition of a certain class in Great Britain where females are, virtually, reduced to the position almost of beasts of burden. Should such an argument be used, I merely give it as an opinion, that such a state of matters is simply an outrage on nature, such as would at any stage of the history of Fijians have been reprobated with indignation.

18. Naturally anxious not to introduce here any vexed question of policy, I leave to the calm and judicial consideration of His Excellency the consideration as to whether or not the system which has been in vogue since 1876, has, even incidentally, led up to the condition of matters as that now exists. For my own part, I am bound, in discharge of the duty cast upon me, by the request contained in the circular, to state that I think it has.

19. I think further, and give it as my opinion:—

1. That the decrease in the population dates from the abolition of polygamy.
2. That it is to be attributed in a great degree to the enforcement of social laws in accordance with the spirit of an advanced civilisation upon a people not prepared by nature to receive them.
3. That abortion is common, and is the effect of those laws. That it is induced from fear of the penalties against fornication; and that it weakens in a most material degree the powers of reproduction when the victim of the habit becomes a married woman; and that its consequences are found in the birth of infants wanting in proper vitality from the moment they are brought into the world.
4. That the practice of masturbation is a further predisposing cause to such want. It is within my knowledge that that has been brought almost to the perfection of a fine art amongst the young men in some districts. The consequence is that, when marriage is at length brought about, the virile strength of the male is absent and weakly progeny the result.
5. The incessant drudgery of women, outside and beyond the duty of their domestic avocations, leaves them without heart. It causes them to regard with disgust any prospect of addition to their cares such as is involved by rearing children. Their power of endurance is sapped until it has become overstrained. Apathy and indifference to the welfare of their offspring are the unnatural and fatal results.

20. I append the extracts from Blue Books, &c., from which the quotations are taken.

21. In conclusion I beg to point out that the results predicted by Administrator Wm. McGregor, C.M.G., (quoted in extract C) appear to have a close chance of being realised; and that those which form part of the observations of His Excellency, quoted in extract G, scarcely seem to have been yet modified by facts. It is plain that the natives continue to "succumb." The sole inferences, therefore, are that they have not yet "adapted themselves to their new surroundings," and that the "process," having had five years' trial since the date of the despatch from which the quotation is taken, and the results having been glaringly unfortunate, it should cease to be administered. Should some active course in another direction not be adopted, the question of extinction is one merely of time.

I have, &c.,

P. S. SOLOMON.

[Enclosure A.]

Extract from Report of a Commission appointed to investigate certain alleged Errors in the Census of the Native Population, and other matters thereto pertaining, taken on 10th March, 1879.

(The Honourable William McGregor, M.D., and Philip Samuel Solomon, Esquire, Commissioners.)

Page 46.
Paragraph 54.

"We are satisfied that in many districts children do not receive a sufficient amount of attention. We had frequent opportunity, from personal observation, of seeing that the mother goes out to the field to plant or to carry in food, and very frequently takes the child with her, 'until,' as Buli Namata said, 'the child is old enough to be left at home with the father.' This is a state of matters that, from the peculiar constitution of society formerly existing in Fiji, can be rectified only by degrees; but it is so very important, that no opportunity should be lost in discouraging women with young children from doing field-work, and from carrying home the food and firewood of the household, and in urging on husbands and fathers not to call upon or permit women to perform such work.

"The

"The not uncommon habit among Fijians of spending a great part of the night in singing and dancing, occasionally heated by exercise, occasionally seated on the wet grass, cannot but be inimical to health. We have watched people seated on the grass on these occasions and seen how the moisture absorbed from it gradually, inch by inch, extended upwards on the sulus of those sitting there, forming a well-defined wet and dry zone. It is difficult to conceive how exposure of this kind could be harmless, and we do not doubt that it frequently induces dysentery, and lays the foundation of chest and other diseases. We would, therefore, suggest that these dances should not be continued late at night so as to produce the evil results we complain of, for it was a matter of personal observation to us that they are frequently kept up long after midnight. Your Excellency will be better able than we are to find a remedy for this evil, which might perhaps be made the subject of a Native Regulation."

[Enclosure B.]

Extract from Report on the Vital Statistics of the Native Population of the Colony for the year 1884.

(Correspondence relating to the Native Population of Fiji. [In continuation of C. 4,434, May, 1885.] Printed in 1887, page 12.)

"Provincial Department, March 18, 1885.

"It would appear from the above figures that other causes have been at work besides whooping-cough and dysentery, but too little reliance can be placed on the diagnosis and classification of diseases by Fijians to enable any one to draw trustworthy conclusions; and, upon the whole, I am disposed to think from my own observation and the discussions at the Provincial Councils, as well as from the opinions expressed by intelligent chiefs, that extraordinary rather than ordinary causes have been at work to produce the present decrease, *though I am by no means sure but that a very great number of deaths arise also from ordinary causes, such as inattention to the very young children, and carelessness in sickness generally*, to which may be added heedlessness regarding their house accommodation and the sanitary condition of some villages.

"(Signed) JAMES BLYTH,
"Secretary of Native Affairs."

[Enclosure C.]

Administrator Wm. McGregor, C.M.G., to The Right Honourable the Earl of Derby, K.G.

(Correspondence relating to the Native Population of Fiji. [In continuation of C. 4,434, May, 1885.] Printed in 1887, page 11.)

"April 10, 1885.

"Mortality from whooping-cough has altogether ceased now, and if no other epidemic finds its way into the Colony there will probably be either a small or no decrease in the population during the current year. *But unless a race makes a distinct gain in years in which there are no epidemics its extinction can only be a question of time.* The question, therefore, presents itself, has all been done that could be done to maintain this race? To answer this question in the affirmative would be tantamount to saying that nothing more could be done than has heretofore been effected, and that therefore the native population must speedily dwindle away. It can hardly be doubted, however, that a good deal can be done in educating both chiefs and people to pay more attention—

- "(a) To the building and repairing of their houses, and the draining and clearing of towns;
- "(b) To the treatment of the sick, both old and young;
- "(c) To the care of young children.

"Experience has already shown that very little can be achieved with regard to these matters by means of regulations, circulars, &c. It is in my opinion absolutely necessary that the Governor himself pay frequent visits to the provinces to see how the chiefs are performing their duties, not only with respect to the important matters I have specially indicated, but with regard to many others. I am quite convinced that nothing save periodical visits from the Governor will effect any improvement in the sanitary and domestic conditions of the people."

[Enclosure D.]

Extract from Opening Speech of His Honour the Administrator at the Annual Meeting of Chiefs held at Tavuki, Kadavu, Monday, May 4th, 1885.

(Wm. McGregor, C.M.G., Administrator.)

(Correspondence relating to the Native Population of Fiji. [In continuation of C. 4,434, May, 1885.] Printed in 1887, pages 19, 20, and 21.)

"I am pained to tell you that during the year ending in September last there was a large decrease in the number of the people, there being actually 2,562 more deaths than births. You, chiefs, will see at once how serious this matter is, and you will not wonder when I tell you that I consider it of infinitely greater importance than anything else you can discuss at this Council. Do not the Government and the chiefs exist only for the good of the people? You, Rokos, are the deputies of the Governor; your duties are to be as a father to your people, to lead them, to teach them, to feed them; and the Queen will hold her Governor and you responsible for their welfare. It is, therefore, our duty to find out why the people have decreased in numbers, and when we have discovered the reasons, then we must secure and apply the remedy.

"The principal, if not the sole, immediate cause of the great decrease of last year was an epidemic of whooping-cough. This is an insidious disease which we cannot keep out of Fiji. True, we have kept out small-pox and cholera by detaining people and ships in quarantine for a long time. But I must tell you that measles and whooping-cough cannot be kept away from you. Fortunately, measles and whooping-cough rarely attack the same person more than once. Moreover, if towns are clean, houses good, and the people in comfortable circumstances, measles and whooping-cough do not often cause many deaths in other countries.

"In time to come there will be a great many more deaths from dysentery than from measles and whooping-cough. Probably few will die of the two last diseases in future. You know that mortality is heavy here without the presence of any new epidemic disease; but the same causes, you must remember, that occasion this heavy mortality in ordinary years, greatly increase the number of deaths from any epidemic disease.

"Now, what are these causes? This question you have discussed in each Council, but not with that earnestness which the extreme importance of the subject demands. The time for indifference is past.

"I believe the people are dying from these causes:—1st Bad houses; 2nd Insufficient food; 3rd Uncleanliness of towns and bad water; 4th Neglect of women, children, and the sick.

"With regard to bad houses. Lately I have been inside several thousands of houses of the people, and I can tell you what are their chief faults. In many of the newer towns the foundations of the houses are not sufficiently raised; in a great number it is even with, or below the surface of, the surrounding ground. Who can lie on a cold damp floor without becoming sick?

"Now,

- Paragraph 23. "Now, as an excuse, which, from what I have noticed in the older towns, I have not been able to accept, many of the common people have said to me, 'We cannot have raised foundations to our houses for it would be disagreeable to our chiefs; in the old days, it would perhaps have brought the club on our heads.'
- Paragraph 27. "Now, as to the second cause, insufficient food. We often hear that there is a scarcity of food in certain districts, but seldom indeed do the chiefs of the land admit that there is any want. The reason of this is, that if the chiefs are diligent, and show a good example, there should seldom be any scarcity of food in Fiji. A chief is therefore ashamed to say, 'Food is scarce with us,' for any one hearing him would exclaim, 'What! has this chief been indolent? Perhaps he limes his head, paints his face, and stalks about, thinking only of himself; or is it that he squabbles with his neighbours about some border town, and lets his people starve?'
- Paragraph 28. "I ask you, chiefs, is it not strange that on the poorest soil of Vanualevu, that of Bua, there is always sufficient food. What one of us who does not know the reason?
- Paragraph 29. "A Regulation regarding the planting of food is in force; how many chiefs or magistrates can say it is carried out? I have seen with my own eyes in several districts that it is not enforced, and that food is not sufficiently abundant, because you now plant less than formerly, and sell more. One Lau Buli recently asked aid from the Government because some of his people were starving. Had he reported to his Roko the latter could no doubt have procured them assistance from some other district. Perhaps that Buli wished to affront his Roko, or to escape reproof for his own negligence if he applied to him; but such things should not occur in Fiji. In the old times there was hardly ever scarcity of food of good quality.
- Paragraph 31. "I come now to the uncleanness of towns. When the town is full of filth and rubbish, the water used by the people is usually bad. Far too little attention is paid to this. How many of you have not forgotten altogether about the regulation as to water supply? None of you would eat a rotten yam, or swallow decaying sea-weed from the beach, but thousands of you drink water more poisonous, and are content, careless whether you suffer from dysentery on the morrow. I have been to towns where the water-pools stink at the doors of the houses of the people, and have even seen it run into the houses in wet weather.
- Paragraph 32. "If you chiefs do not take care, you will soon have only rats and mud-crabs to rule over in such towns.
- Paragraph 34. "As to the neglect of women, children, and the sick.
- "In one of your former Councils, a Buli, when asked how it was that the population was increasing so fast in his district, replied, 'Perhaps it is because no woman is allowed to stir about for three weeks after giving birth to a child, nor until the chief of the town has seen that both mother and child are strong.' How many of you have followed the wise example of Buli Bouboucou in this?
- Paragraph 36. "Some of you say, 'The children of the whites live because they get cow's milk; our children die because we have no cow's milk to give them.' How many Fijians are present here that were brought up on cow's milk? Yet ye are strong men, and so we were your fathers; and they and you were brought up on the produce of the land. *The truth is, that you chiefs were reared by women that were well fed, that were kept comfortable, and had nothing to do except to care for you.* But the only food employed was that of the land, the same as had been used by your fathers from time immemorial.
- Paragraph 37. "The keeping and tending of cows is unknown to you Fijians, and is moreover rendered very difficult on account of the nature of your cultivation. I therefore doubt that for a long time to come it will succeed with you. *But if a mother has rest, a dry comfortable house, and an abundance of good food, the produce of the land, she can nourish her child herself until it is able to eat.*
- Paragraph 33. "The rearing of fowls and the preparation of arrowroot, articles of great use in case of sickness are, I find, not attended to as provided in the regulation, and often proper use is not made of such fowls as are available."

[Enclosure E.]

Extract from Report on the Vital Statistics of the Native Population of the Colony for the year 1885.

(Correspondence relating to the Native Population of Fiji. [In continuation of C. 4,434, May, 1885.] Printed in 1887, page 159).

"Provincial Department, Suva, June 16th, 1886.

- Paragraph 14. "The birth-rate is high, and has been increasing steadily. The death-rate for young children is also high and is general everywhere. I respectfully submit, however, that there are causes at work to produce this high death-rate which are not natural, and these causes spring from the strain above mentioned.* That is my argument. The conclusion to which I have come is that the root of the matter is in the minds of the people, not in their bodies; in other words, that it is mental, not physical, and that the vitality or fecundity of the people is unimpaired. One phase of it is seen in the men, who no longer rely on their own efforts to achieve some common good, but trust to the Government doing for them that which they ought to do for themselves, and hence creeps in that incipient indifference to do what they know they ought to do, and in fact, what they wish to do, followed by a careless and fatal inaction. *It shows itself under another aspect in the carelessness above referred to, of the women in the nature of their offspring;* and it exists in yet other forms not so easily grappled with, though no less widely spread, to which I now advert with some diffidence; not on account of want of knowledge of the facts, but from a consciousness that these facts are more intimately connected with the minds of the actors, and their object and intention, than with the means employed.

"There can be no doubt that the native women use native drugs, the effect of which, they believe, is to counteract the laws of nature in child-bearing and child-rearing. Whether or not the drugs have the effect they are believed by them to have is not to the purpose. They are taken with a specific object in view, though that object is not always the same. *In some, the intention is to prevent conception, in others, to produce a child that will not live.* In the polygamous times this science was known to a few old women only. Now every girl in the country knows some one or other of these roots or leaves, and a very great number of the girls use them, chiefly to avoid exposure and punishment. There is a way to cope with this evil which has many recommendations not unaccompanied by some drawbacks. It would help the end in view, though perhaps it would not attain it, if girls who were found to be pregnant were exempted from the operation of the Native Regulation regarding fornication (*veidauci*). I do not say that the regulation should then affect the men only, but it would affect them chiefly. It is possible that by this means the women would gradually cast away their fears and cherish the love of their offspring which is natural to them. The fear I speak of has nothing to do with the girl's conscience. It is a fear born of missionary-monogamy and *matanitu*. This exemption would not in my judgment be (as at first sight might appear), a premium on immortality—I should even be disposed to dispute the accuracy of the expression—but rather an acknowledgment of the sacredness of life. It would also be a *tabu* on future misconduct. In the old days when a girl (unwed or not betrothed) was found to be pregnant, her mother took her in charge, and a strict watch was kept over her. This is one of the many good customs prevailing in polygamous times that have lapsed, or rather have been snapt in the strain by the violence of the change. I propose to revive it if possible, or at all events to direct attention to the necessity of doing so.

"I do not know that the natives would altogether approve of this change being made, but I think that the more intelligent of them would welcome any effort made to discontinue the baneful use of noxious herbs.

"(Signed) JAMES BLYTH,
"Secretary for Native Affairs."

[Enclosure

* "The sudden change to monogamy and a system of morality foreign to their policy was a great check to, and a strong strain on the race."

[Enclosure F.]

Extract from Minute by the Chief Medical Officer, Wm. McGregor, C.M.G., upon Mr. Commissioner Blyth's Report.

(Correspondence relating to the Native Population of Fiji. [In continuation of C. 4,434, May, 1885.] Printed in 1887, page 177.)

"In Fiji, 36·6 per centum of all deaths took place under one year of age. The average percentage of male deaths in proportion to the whole deaths of Europe is 21·1; in England, 14·9; in Scotland, 12·2; in Ireland, 9·6. The highest are Russia, 27·7; Austria and Hungary, 24·5; lowest, Ireland, 9·6; Norway, 10·5. Of the deaths in Fiji under one year, three-sevenths take place during the first month. It is to the care and treatment, therefore, of young children that attention requires to be directed.

"There is nothing mystic connected with the heavy mortality. It is owing lately to epidemic disease, whooping-cough; and there is a permanent cause. The mother's time is not devoted so much to the child as it ought to be, especially during the first year. Add to this that houses are sometimes bad, and food not always either good or abundant.

"July 1, 1886."

[Enclosure G.]

Extract from Despatch,—Administrator J. B. Thurston, C.M.G., to The Right Honourable Edward Stanhope, M.P.

(Correspondence relating to the Native Population of Fiji. [In continuation of C. 4,434, May, 1885.] Printed in 1887, pages 154, 155, and 156.)

"October 21st, 1886.

"The Chief Medical Officer, Dr. McGregor, whose memorandum upon the Commissioner's report is annexed, observes that there is nothing mystic connected with the heavy mortality. 'It is owing lately,' he states, 'to the epidemic disease (whooping-cough), and there is a permanent cause. The mother's time is not devoted so much to the child as it ought to be, especially during the first year. Add to this that houses are sometimes bad, and food not always either good or abundant.'

"I concur with Dr. McGregor in thinking that not much weight is to be attached to the uses of native drugs by women. In spite of everything in this respect the birth-rate is high. The evil is that children are not reared. Nearly 37 per cent. of them, as before said, die before reaching the age of one year.

"There is one point in connection with monogamic marriages upon which I may touch, and which, in my opinion, will, for many years to come, continue to have effect. It may, I think, be laid down as an axiom of universal application that man is not fond of work. Monogamy has increased the work of women. They did not, perhaps, like all things connected with a state of polygamy, but on the whole, I believe, they like the incessant work entailed by monogamic life still less.

"In a polygamous state, a woman when with child, was allowed (in fact it was the customary law) to remain in the house. Other wives worked, brought food and water, helped in the garden, caught fish, made cloth, cooked, &c., &c.

"It was so also after child-birth. The mother did little or nothing but look after the child. Other mothers helped the child perchance as nurses. They had a husband in common. They had, in a sense, children in common. There was to their minds nothing repugnant in the one idea or in the other.

"The law, and that which Mr. Blyth a little oddly describes as 'missionary-monogamy,' has altered this state of things.

"The wife has now to work at all times for her husband. She has, so she says, no rest; and that which she hates still more than work, is the advances of her spouse whether while 'eniente' or nursing.

"The man abhors being tied to one woman, who in conformity with native ideas, is at times unclean, no less than she does. To both parties the idea is as repugnant as it can possibly be conceived. If the man's advances are, however, persistent, the woman neglects her child, and says the husband 'is killing it.'

"If, owing to the position in which monogamy places him, the man forms connections with other women, the wife becomes jealous, tries to procure abortion, or in the event of its birth ceases to feed or care for her child, and it dies. Missionaries say this was also one result of polygamy. I think it was; but if I may depend upon the information given me by native women who have lived the best part of their lives in such a state it was a very small result. Polygamy was to their minds a natural state, monogamy was unnatural, and is so still.

"The problem before the Government, though simple in its aspects, is fraught with difficulty.

"As the Commissioner says, the natives have been brought suddenly face to face with a stern morality, and new surroundings which they do not understand. They are also influenced, and generally speaking prejudicially so, by contact with a civilisation 2,000 years before their time.

"There is at present no reason for supposing that the natives of Fiji will not survive the strain and shock to which they are being subjected, though this supposition is chiefly warranted by the antecedent hope that the policy of Her Majesty's Government towards them may be one of continuity.

"Natives will slowly adapt themselves to their new surroundings, though many must succumb in the process.

"Every effort should, in my opinion, be made to raise the status of native women. This I regard as essential to any possibility of moral improvement in the relations of the sexes. The effort needs money and specially selected men, working, not for a year or so, but for two or three generations."

No. 22.

The Reverend W. Slade, Wesleyan Missionary, Taviumi, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Vuna Point, 18 February, 1892.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your Circular, relating to the Decrease of the Native Population of these islands, and, in compliance with your request, I respectfully submit my views thereon.

I notice that the inquiries are limited to the question of infant mortality. I could wish that there were no such limitation, and that I were at liberty to deal with the subject at large, and include my views on the large premature adult mortality that I have observed in those parts of Fiji, with which I am best acquainted.*

Confining myself, however, to the scope of your circular, I am happy to record the result of my observations and experience in regard to infant mortality, and shall be only too glad if I may contribute, in however small a degree, to the discovery of a remedy, if any may be found.

I

* Invited to submit any further views on the general question,—26th April, 1892. No reply received at 16th August, 1892.

I may remark, in passing, that I have always been deeply interested in South Pacific philology, and what I now advance are not hastily formed opinions, but the results of observations extending over the whole period of my residence in these islands.

1. It is, I think, generally recognised, that the physical stamina of the Fijians is not equal to their physical appearance, and that they cannot, as regards the former, compete with Indo-European races. While the Fijian natives have an apparent splendid physical development they lack power of endurance; and trifling ailments that hardier people easily shake off, often prove fatal to them. Whether the Fijians have always been so, or at what period in their history the deterioration set in, and the causes from which it has arisen, are questions which need not be discussed. I mention the fact merely to remark that the lack of physical stamina observable in adults also extends to infants; that these in consequence commence life inadequately supplied with physical endurance, and that their chances of survival are proportionately lessened.

This applies to all children (Fijian).

2. But my experience has shown me that a fair proportion of native children are born with congenital disease or weakness that renders early decease an almost foregone conclusion. For instance, I have met with infants afflicted with *coko* from birth, others with cutaneous eruptions of an intermittent sort, and of all such who have come under my notice I do not remember that any survived infancy.

I have also found that while the Fijian women take great care of themselves at conception and confinement, they are very careless and indiscreet during pregnancy. They travel long distances on foot, engage in fishing, and remain for long periods in the water. As a consequence, I think, premature confinements are not infrequent, and weakly children.

It follows, therefore, that many children are born with less than the usual amount of physical stamina, and, therefore, also fewer chances of survival.

3. The Fijian mother is undoubtedly very careless of her offspring. The reason is to be found in her unstable character. The cares of maternity appear to become irksome to her. For long periods she leaves her offspring in charge of children who are themselves mere infants, and at such times the helpless child is wholly without nourishment. I have often passed through villages and heard the cry of hungry infants, whose mothers have sauntered away to the plantation, or gone to fish.

Healthy children do not easily survive such carelessness, and the weakly have no chance.

4. As in the case of other races, a number of Fijian mothers lack the means of nourishing their offspring. This arises in some cases from constitutional causes, in others from illnesses incurred during the period of lactation and that terminate the lacteal secretion. When this happens, the emergency is sometimes met by another woman suckling the child, but as in that case the foster-mother has her own child to nourish, the supply for each is diminished, and the chances of survival lessened for both. It sometimes happens that no foster-mother can be obtained, and there is then nothing the Fijian woman can do for her child, which pines and dies. The supply of milk, cow or other, with which a civilised mother can atone for the absence of the natural supply is quite inaccessible to the large majority of Fijian mothers. I have met with cases of infantile mortality from this cause.

5. In my opinion weakly children have few chances of survival. The Fijian woman lacks both patience and resource. The heroic perseverance with which a true civilised mother will nurse into vigorous flame a feeble spark of humanity I have never met among Fijians. The women like to have children, but soon weary when the children are weakly, and they are quite unadapted to the always difficult task of rearing such. I have at present at this station a mother, whose child, born after seven months' gestation, is very fragile. The woman herself cannot supply sufficient nourishment to the child, and has been told to come to the house twice a day for fresh cow's milk. She came for a few days and then ceased. Upon inquiry I found, that although her child was dying of starvation, she found it irksome to apply for the milk. Her maternal affection failed under the strain of walking one hundred yards twice a day. It was only after I had spoken very strongly to her husband and herself that this woman resumed her duty, and she still needs occasional reminders on the subject. I fear she is but a type of most Fijian mothers of delicate children.

6. The chances of Fijian women bearing healthy children are lessened by their loose morality. I have been much shocked to find at what an early age native girls surrender their virtue. Long before puberty many girls have lost their maidenhood. The excitation of the immature organs must result in organic weakness, and affect the offspring of the race.

To summarise.

All Fijian children commence life ill-supplied with physical stamina. Many children have much less than their share.

From carelessness of mothers and other causes healthy children have their chances of survival lessened, and weakly children have their few chances made very much fewer, or quite taken away.

One other factor in the mortality of infants I may mention, viz., the unhealthy location of very many villages. I know villages where a child is seldom reared, and others where the mortality is great; villages on marshy ground, low-lying, and full of malaria; villages with foul-smelling ditches in their midst, and insufficient drainage, where diarrhoea and dysentery reign. From such causes both adults and infants suffer.

Now as to the remedy, I must frankly say that I can think of no immediate remedy. To change the nature of the Fijian woman—to transform her from the unstable, unthinking, careless creature she is now into the likeness of the true-hearted mother of European type—this involves time, and plenty of it.

The measures already adopted by the Government to improve the sites of villages, and free the women from heavy toil and secure them opportunities to attend to their children, as well as the ordinances for the suppression of immorality,—these will undoubtedly lessen the rate of decrease of population, and must command the admiration of every well-wisher of the race.

But

But, until Fijian mothers are changed, I fear that infant mortality will continue to be a potent factor in the diminution of the people.

To bring about that change Her Majesty's Government in Fiji may always count on the hearty co-operation of every member of the Mission to which it is my privilege to belong.

I have, &c.,
W. SLADE.

No. 23.

W. L. Murray, Esq., Planter, Navua, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Navua, 24 February, 1892.

In reply to your Circular of 30th December, I beg to submit the following :—

That at no very remote date this group of islands was thickly populated. I gather this from conversations I have had with aged Fijians, and from the many sites of towns and fortifications to be met with, and which are now empty, but from their extent must have been more populous than most towns of the present day.

In the olden time, the chief was the sole ruler of his tribe, he was always on the alert to prevent other tribes from making raids within his territory, consequently he was energetic and ambitious—not only that his people might be protected from others, but that the prestige of his tribe be kept up: and it must be remembered that they were continually at war, one tribe being the natural enemy of the adjoining one; therefore the people were active.

Because the tribes were nearly always at war with each other, I do not wish to imply that their numbers were decreased in any appreciable degree on that account. I do not think that the victims of warfare were great—their weapons were too primitive for that. Then again, because they were warlike, it was imperative that they were well provided with food. As I have said, their weapons were primitive, so likewise were their implements of agriculture. It must have been far more laborious at that time to raise their crops, than at the present; nevertheless they were well supplied with good food. I remember, even during my residence in the group, that the natives twenty-two years ago had infinitely more food than now. Therefore, at that period (when governed by their chiefs) they were not only ambitious, but energetic and thrifty, and consequently a healthy race.

Now we come to the appearance of Europeans in the group, who at first were not numerous, and in their wake arms and ammunition. The use of firearms, of course, was quite novel to the natives, and being such an improvement on their own weapons, raised their cupidity at once, and for which they bartered their lands, and shot each other at their own sweet will. But I do not put this forward as the cause of the decline of the race, but I do maintain, that as the merchandise of the Europeans increased, so the natives purchased, and their own implements were laid aside, planting became less laborious, and as the raising of their crops became less trouble, so, in the same ratio, they become more indolent, until at last they are too lazy to grow sufficient food for their requirements.

Then again, as the European influence gained power, so the chiefs have lost theirs, until they have simply become nonentities. A chief is no longer the oracle of his tribe, he is no longer infallible, he is simply an official who may be supplanted at any moment; hence the people themselves have lost their ambition also.

To show this more clearly. At the period when whites were not so numerous the natives would work to supply the requirements of the whites, but as the whites and their merchandise increased, so the natives became less inclined to work, and did less; but their wants had to be supplied all the same, so they had to buy, and what had they to sell?—Food. And so this has been going on from year to year until we find them reduced to a state of semi-starvation, and, owing entirely to their indolence. For years past the natives have not grown sufficient food for their requirements, and have subsisted in a great measure upon improper food.

I will now say something of the existing Native Regulations. I think they are good were they carried out, which they are not; for instance, one of the Regulations (and I think the most important), is "*Sa sau tu na Vanua, se segai*." Now, I have heard this question asked at Provincial Meetings (and I have attended many), the reply has always been in the affirmative, while I have known at the time that the district was, and had been almost entirely existing on green bananas; and so with all the Regulations. The questions are asked and the replies accepted as correct. It is nobody's business to ascertain the true state of affairs.

Then there is the terrible mortality among children, which is very serious. Well, we will return to the period when the chiefs ruled. At that time a woman giving birth to a child did not again become pregnant until the child was weaned. At least three years expired, and often longer, before this was accomplished. The mother in the meantime was well supplied with good food, and plenty of it, and did nothing else than look after her child. It appears to have been a very wise custom to have allowed the child to remain such a length of time with its mother. When the child was weaned it was strong and healthy. But what do we find of late years?—A woman bearing a child cannot spare a lengthy period to attend her child; she has other duties to perform besides the household duties; there is the plantation to attend; and, although suckling her child, she is subsisting upon improper food, and what is yet more fatal, instead of suckling her child for three years, she will become pregnant in half that time (this was an unheard of occurrence in the olden time), the consequence is—the child dies. Here the same cause appears, the man has become so indolent that he has shifted a great portion of his work on to his wife's shoulders, who is unable to do everything, and so there is a dearth of proper food, and another sickly infant is born. It has also come under my notice that young women, who appear strong and healthy, marry—and in the space of a very few years become broken-down old hags. The same cause applies.

Then

Then take another view of the case. I have known native women cohabiting with Europeans—then the whole thing is reversed—the woman not only brings up healthy children, but bears them at shorter intervals than was customary with the natives, and—why is this?—Because she is properly fed and cared for. Then, I say, how can anything else be looked for than a heavy percentage of deaths among native children when their mothers are treated in this way.

So you will gather, from the foregoing, that I attribute the decadence of the native race absolutely to their loss of energy.

Remedy :—(1st) Some new system must be introduced among the native race, by which they will become more active. They must be taught some object—some aim in life in fact—that to live something more is necessary than getting up in the morning and going to bed again at night. But to effect this change of life will be difficult—so difficult that I almost doubt its attainment. However of this I am sure, that such a change must be wrought, and that speedily, or the Fijian will soon become extinct. (2nd) That more food planting must be insisted on—not as the Regulation is now, the question asked only ; but that every male adult be held responsible for a certain amount of proper food—let him grow even more than his own requirements, let him have some to dispose of—and that women when pregnant or suckling a child be exempt from work. (3rd) I would also recommend that tribes be encouraged to intermarry more than they do, more especially tribes that dwell at a distance from each other.

In conclusion, to bear out my theory, I will draw your attention to the Polynesians who are brought to this group as labourers. The death-rate is not excessive among them, simply because they are made to live active lives, and are well fed and cared for by their employers.

I have, &c.,

W. L. MURRAY.

No. 24.

William Sutherland, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Navua, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Stipendiary Magistrate's Office,
Navua, 22 February, 1892.

In reply to your letter, No. 253-1892, respecting the Decrease in the Native Population, I have the honour to submit the following remarks :—

2. I agree with the conclusion arrived at, viz., that the decrease is mainly due to the excessive mortality among young children. It is indeed unnecessary, in my opinion, to consider the subject so far as it relates to adults as the cause of any excessive mortality among grown-up people can almost always be accounted for.

3. The excessive mortality is due, I believe, to the neglect of the mothers, but brought about in a great measure through causes over which they have no control. I have seen native children treated in a way, that, from a European point of view, would cause death. I will give two instances :—(1) At Savusavu a chief lived just outside my fence, and his wife had borne him many children, but all had died except one boy. He used to blame her for neglecting the children when young, and not without cause, as in a cold morning before sunrise she had been seen bathing her child of a few months old in the creek, and not drying it or wrapping it up afterwards. I should also mention that the house this chief lived in was situated in a low, damp spot, with pigs about the doors, making the place unfit for habitation ; and at night there would only be the reed wall between the animals outside and the woman and child inside. This chief when spoken to by me about the state of his dwelling used to say, "It is all the same, my children died when my large house was standing." This, no doubt was the case, but I should have been surprised if his children had been reared under the conditions related above. (2) At the same place a young woman was married and gave birth to her first child—an exceptionally healthy-looking one—and which received due care and attention for a month or two, but the mother commenced to leave it for hours at a time to go fishing with the other women. The child became sick, and one day, after a long absence, the mother came home and found it dead, probably from convulsions. At the time I set this case down as one of pure neglect on the part of the mother. The husband was well enough off and it was not necessary, as, however, it often is, that the mother should have exposed herself to the wet and cold.

4. The conditions of life under which the natives now live, must, I think, also be taken into consideration. Immorality has, I believe, increased as the consequences (as the natives look at them) to offenders are not so serious as in old days ; young girls, too—I observed this most at Macuata,—prefer leading a frivolous existence to settling down to the ordinary routine of village life ; and again after marriage, which it is of course not possible for them to look at in the solemn and responsible light we Europeans do, many couples separate and never live together again. The women thus set free are not strictly virtuous, and, not to encumber themselves, adopt means to prevent their bearing children. Statistics as to the number of married couples living apart, the length of time they lived together after marriage, their age, children born, &c., &c., would be interesting as bearing on this point. I regret that I have not the time now to collect the particulars in my district.

5. Although much has been done in Fiji there is still room for an improvement in the condition of the women. They are expected to do too much hard work to be fit to successfully bring up their children, and I fear the lower the population becomes the worse it will be for the women in this respect. Native children do not assist their parents in any work. Even youths of 16 and 18 years of age do nothing but go to school and play. (I should mention here that about a year ago I drew attention to this in connection with Taxes, and a notice appeared in *Na Mata* on the subject, and in this district a number of young men were set free from the schools to take part in village work.)

6. It is also my belief that the keeping of pigs in the villages has a deal to do with the health of the inhabitants, especially children. The conditions under which pigs are kept, are, as a rule, abominable. And after all what benefit does a common *tauvei* get from his pigs? Probably a feast once in three or six months, which does him more harm than good. Were a pig killed and salted down, or divided fresh, periodically among a family or families it would be for their good. It is, however, to the conditions under which they are kept that I wish chiefly to draw attention. A herd of goats in each village would be far preferable to pigs in every way.

7. I would now refer to the Deuba District, where there has been an increase of population extending over eight of these last ten years, and which I set down, and the Deuba natives do so themselves also, to their being better off than their neighbours. The total *net* income of the Deuba people (the population as given by the last Census is 205) from bananas and rents during the year 1891 would be about £2,000. They keep their women at home to look after the house and children. Pigs are strictly excluded from the villages, and sanitary matters generally are attended to. The births and deaths for these last ten years are as under:—

Year.	Births.	Deaths.	Increase.	Decrease.
1882	11	10	1	
1883	7	6	1	
1884	4	16*	...	12
1885	12	5	7	
1886	8	10	...	2
1887	11	10	1	
1888	8	8	...	
1889	10	4	6	
1890	11	3	8	
1891	8	8	...	
1892†	2	...	2	
	92	80	26	14

* 11 of these were children.

† 1st January to 20th February.

Increase during three years—1889, 1890, and 1891 ... 14

Total increase during the last ten years (including 1892 to date) ... 12

8. As to how the present state of matters can be remedied it is exceedingly difficult to make any suggestions. There appear to be enough Regulations in force already; the difficulty is in the administration. Provision is made for the care of the young, and the aged, and the sick, and for the better treatment of women, and also for the cleanliness of villages. A native, if left to himself, however, can not be depended upon to carry out any routine work, and the chiefs, in most cases, are apathetic. The younger generation of native officials are certainly a decided improvement on the older men they have succeeded. It is probable that if the natives were placed more directly under European control, the evils referred to might be mitigated, and the excessive mortality to some extent checked. Were the European official directly responsible to His Excellency the Governor for the state of his district, a general improvement in the state of the people might be effected.

9. Although it does not refer to children, I may draw attention to the fact, that during the nine years I have been a magistrate, and with an average of about thirty men under my care, there has only been one death among them, and that one from blood-poisoning.

10. I have, I fear, not been able to throw much light on this interesting question. The few recommendations I have to make may be summed up as follows:—

1. An improvement in the condition of the women.
2. An improvement in the sanitary condition of villages.
3. More direct European control.

I have, &c.,
WM. SUTHERLAND.

No. 25.

C. Daniels, Esq., M.D., &c., Government Medical Officer, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Nadurulolo, 26 February, 1892.

I regret to state, in answer to your Circular ($\frac{279}{1892}$) of December 30th, that I have had neither time nor opportunity to gain more than a very superficial knowledge of the Fijians, and have no definite opinion as to the cause of their decrease.

2. With reference to the high infantile mortality however, there is a very marked difference in the appearance of the children before and after they have had *coko*. The former are healthy-looking, plump, and firm; the latter, both during the disease and for some time after have the distended abdomens and shrunken limbs usual in children whose digestive organs are at fault. European parents of half-caste children who have had the disease, and even some Fijians, say that it is very long before their

their children become really healthy after being attacked by this disease; and I know that in adult Indians it is accompanied by debility to a marked extent.

3. This point is, in my opinion, of sufficient importance to be decided in the only possible way, *i.e.*, by statistics.

4. Registration amongst the Fijians is not difficult, and is inexpensive; and sufficient statistics would be obtained by—(1st) Having all cases of *coko* registered as they occur; and (2nd) In every case of a juvenile death the question, whether or no the child had had *coko*, to be asked, and the answer registered. From the statistics so obtained a definite answer could be procured to the question, “Is the mortality greater amongst children at each successive period who have or have not had *coko*?”

5. In case *coko* were shown to be an important factor, I don't think it would be possible, or even advisable, at present, to endeavour by isolation, or otherwise, to stamp out the disease. But possibly by the combined influence of the Government, Missionaries, and Native Chiefs, the mothers might be persuaded to avoid infection till the children were older and better able to withstand its effects.

6. The special mortality in this district is shared by all nationalities, particularly when living on flats close to the river—such as is the usual site of a Fiji town.

I have, &c.,
C. DANIELS.

No. 26.

W. B. Chute, Esq., Planter, Vatulele, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Vatulele, 20 February, 1892.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your Circular of 3rd instant, and to offer you the results of my experience and inquiries into the subject of it. I have been in Fiji nearly twenty-two years, mostly residing and trading amongst the natives, and this matter has occupied a great deal of my attention. I think the principal causes of the decadence of the native race are their own social habits and customs, and are unaffected by their intercourse with white men, but have been in existence for a long time, and, I am afraid, are beyond the reach of legislation; there are, however, some secondary causes which might be removed.

Most of the South Sea Islands being of small extent, and still further subdivided by their continual wars, close in-and-in breeding has prevailed, which has reduced the stamina of the people, and has resulted in a general decay of the race, which was in operation before the discovery of the islands.

This has been particularly the case in Fiji, as the women were generally killed in war instead of being taken alive as in other savage countries, and it is still going on; the inhabitants of each town intermarry amongst themselves almost exclusively, and even now it is extremely difficult for a stranger to obtain a wife in any town, as he will be opposed by the whole community; most marriages are made up by the relations, and the present marriage laws favour this state of affairs, making so many consents to be necessary before marriage can be performed. I am convinced that out of ten couples in any town, nine will be found to be natives of it and related; and, although there are many changes in their marital relations, they are still confined to the same small community. This does not apply so much to the chiefs, who are, therefore, generally physically superior to the commonality.

Another cause is the long period of lactation. Mothers seldom wean their children before three years of age, and often not till five or six, which is injurious to both mother and child, and is a great preventative to large families.

Married women are also very much overworked, especially in Vitilevu and part of Vanualevu, with the result that young children are much neglected, and the women also during pregnancy have still to carry heavy loads of firewood and water—a labour especially injurious to women in their condition.

The causing of abortion is very prevalent; much more so, I believe, than is suspected by the Government, especially among unmarried women, under fear of the punishment of the law. I do not think it is fear of shame causes it, as I have always seen that even the most profligate women do not seem to be thought much worse of or in any way treated as outcasts; but the fear of the fine is sufficient to make both parties try to conceal their fault by any means whatever. Even the married women very generally use herbs to prevent conception (*wai ni yava*), which they believe to be efficacious, though I understand medical men are sceptical about it. I think the long separation between husband and wife enjoined by Fiji custom from the first appearance of pregnancy to three years often after the birth of the child, has a great deal to do with the unwillingness of the married women to bear children.

As to the penal laws against fornication, I do not think they have the slightest effect in making the people virtuous, but have a great deal in causing abortion to escape their operation.

My experience in several of the groups of the Pacific, comprising Fiji, Tonga, Rotumah, Samoa, Ellice and Gilbert Groups, Marshalls, and Carolines, is that the diminution of the inhabitants is in proportion to the strictness of the missionary laws and their power in carrying them out. This is remarkably exemplified in two of the Caroline Islands, Strong's Island and Ascension. About thirty-five years ago these islands were alike in population, climate, and fruitfulness, but about twenty-eight years ago Strong's was made the head station of the American Board of Missions, and they obtained full power over it, making very strict and severe morality laws. In Ascension they never gained influence, and the natives followed their own exceedingly lax code of morals. Strong's soon ceased to be visited by whaleships, while Ascension is still the port for five or six every year, so that there is still the risk there of imported disease from which Strong's is free; but the population of the latter island is now about 200 souls, while Ascension has still about 5,000, as many as it had when first visited. In Samoa also the penal code of the missionaries was never carried out, and the population there is increasing. In this group also there has been a great infusion of new blood, owing to the influx and intermixture of Tongans

Tongans, Savage Islanders, Gilbert Islanders, Rarotongans, and Europeans, who have all freely intermarried with the natives.

Most natives of Fiji whom I have questioned on the subject attribute the great infant mortality to what they call *vaka dadedabe*, that is to intercourse between the parents of the children while still suckling (though contrary to Fiji law), and to their not having cow's milk to give the children in place of the mother's become unwholesome. By this they account for the superior vitality of white children when brought to their notice.

Although something has been done in the removal of towns from unhealthy sites, there is still great room for improvement in that respect. Many of the native towns are built at the mouths of small creeks on flat swampy ground, and not even raised off the surface by an elevated foundation, which is only allowed to chiefs. If a common man were to build one on which to put his house, the chief would interfere and punish him for insolence; so that the people sleep on mats, covering a damp and mouldy mass of grass or cocoanut leaves, in direct contact with the wet and undrained earth. I think that so far from its being prohibited no house should be allowed to be built without a raised foundation, especially in a damp situation.

Sanitary arrangements are utterly neglected in Fiji towns, the pigs being the only scavengers, which causes epidemics of dysentery; especially as after every death there is a great eating of pigs which have been eating all the offal and filth of the town, and so one death causes many.

There are, I dare say, several other reasons which might be adduced, but I think these are the principal that I have found in the course of my experience. The only thing I can suggest as remedies would be to simplify the laws of marriage so as to favour intermarriages between distant parts of the country, at present almost impossible owing to the number of consents to be obtained, more even than the law requires.

The abolition of the penalties for fornication to which parties are often driven by the difficulty of marriage before alluded to.

The better sanitation of the towns under white inspection, perfectly hopeless under native authority.

These suggestions are, I know, utterly inadequate to reach the main causes of native mortality, but as I first stated I fear they are beyond the power of legislation.

I have, &c.,
W. B. CHUTE.

No. 27.

Hamilton Hunter, Esq., Chief Police Magistrate, Suva, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva Police Court, 29th February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the Circular of the 30th December, 1891 (C.S.O. 251-1892), in which His Excellency the Governor invites my views on the decrease of the Fijians and asks for suggestions as to what remedies are practicable to stay the rapid decline of the native race.

2. The subject is one of such grave importance to the natives of this Colony, that I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion, irrespective of religious, governmental, or any other views on the subject; an opinion that may be taken for what it is worth—but still an opinion based on experience after many years' residence in the country.

3. Taking it for granted that "the Decrease of the Native Population is due to the phenomenal rate of mortality among infants," and the figures quoted in the circular certainly support that view, it will be sufficient, for the present, only to deal with that part of the subject.

4. On comparing the birth-rate for 1887, quoted in the circular as 40.10 per mille, with that of European countries and British possessions, the Fijian birth-rate appears to be unusually high. In the former Fiji stands second, and in the latter—out of a group of twenty-three British possessions—Fiji stands fifth, Grenada heading the list with 45.3 per mille.

5. The principal and immediate causes for this enormous infantile mortality are, in my opinion,—

- (i) Abolition of polygamy;
- (ii) Punishment for fornication;
- (iii) The restrictive nature of the communal system of native government.

6. With regard to the first, I regret to have to disagree with such an authority as the Rev. Lorimer Fison; but, as polygamy was first discountenanced by religious pressure being brought to bear upon the chiefs by the missionaries, it may be possible that the reverend gentleman has taken a somewhat biassed view of the case, and he could hardly be expected to say, that the religious teachings as to marital duties instilled into the people by his predecessors, had proved, to a certain extent, fatal to their existence as a race.

7. After Annexation this religious pressure was supported by governmental regulations—as to adultery and fornication—and the death-knell of the old customs of polygamy and concubinage was sounded. Households were thinned out, and the thousand and one domestic duties, such as cooking, fishing, carrying firewood, making mats, &c., &c., which were formerly performed by the female members of the household, devolved upon one, assisted perhaps by some aged relative. These duties have to be performed irrespective of the condition of the woman. It is a common sight to see a woman, whose maternal condition is painfully apparent, staggering under a load of firewood, or standing in the water up to her waist fishing. She has to work up to within a day or two of her confinement, and, when in travail, has to trust to the good offices of some old woman, instead of being, as formerly, well looked after by the other female members of the household, who took as much interest in the welfare of the unborn babe

as

as the mother herself. After the birth of the child, having no one to assist her in her household duties, the mother exerts herself before she has properly recovered her strength, thus she is unable to stand the severe strain of suckling her babe who, in consequence, is neglected, and, in the absence of its natural nourishment—milk,—is fed upon anything that will allay its hunger and silence its wailing, the child becomes weakly and finally succumbs to the first infantile ailment.

8. The young mother, after the sad experiences attending the birth of her first child, takes very good care that in the future there is no further addition to her family. The means employed result in a large number of miscarriages and still-born children. Of the latter, in 1887, the rate was 42·48 per mille of the births.

9. It is somewhat difficult to suggest a remedy, as it is out of the question at this stage to revert to and legalise polygamy—though it is a great pity that it was ever interfered with—but steps should be taken to protect and assist the woman who is *enceinte* until such time as both the mother and child are in a condition to battle with the troubles of life.

10.—(ii) Punishment for fornication.—The regulations dealing with this are, in my opinion, nothing more than a direct incentive to procuring abortion and other practices which must necessarily interfere with and injure the child-bearing functions of the woman, and thereby affect the future of the race. The natural immoral character of the Fijians as a race, whether owing to their old customs, aided by climatic effects or what, I cannot say, makes it a difficult task to improve the moral status of the people. But I think a greater effect would be attained by moral persuasion than by legal enactments with their fines and imprisonments, or religious denunciations from the pulpit followed by excommunication from the fold of the Church.

11. The remedy for this would be to temper religious sentimentality with a little nineteenth-century common-sense, and let the regulations fall into disuse. This might, and most probably, would lead to an increase of illegitimate births; but what of that if the race live!

12.—(iii) The restrictive nature of the communal system of native government.—This system, admirable though it may be for the purposes of governing the natives through the native chiefs at the least possible cost, retards rather than advances the increase of the race.

13. The Fijian, after seventeen years of British rule, is fast undergoing a change. Intermixture with Europeans has made him somewhat discontented and restive under the control of his chief. He wishes to be more free, to come and go as he will, to work when and where he likes, and lastly to spend or hoard his earnings in his own way. This longing on his part—opposed to the system of communal government—has the effect of making his village-life irksome to him. He is averse to marrying because it ties him more closely to his district. By legislative enactments the married man is prevented from leaving his district to seek work except under such prohibitory regulations as have been, or may be, from time to time made by the Native Board. Thus the man, who of all others ought to earn money for the support of those dependent upon him, is debarred from doing so. When the Fijian does marry, which he generally does under pressure, he has no wish to have a family as it entails more mouths to fill and, therefore, more planting to be done; and should he be successful in his planting venture the product of his toil is often taken from him under the plea of *lala*,—the bane of the Fijian's existence,—or for the purpose of supporting members of his *matagali* who are more indolent than himself. Thus he has no incentive to work or marry. His sole aim and object in life is to fill his belly at the least possible cost of exertion.

14. This unnatural disinclination to marry on the part of the men has very materially lowered the status and value of the woman as a unit in the *matagali*, and she is looked upon more as a necessary evil, than as the means of reproducing the race and increasing the strength and importance of the family.

15. This applies to the masses and not to the classes; and it is to the wellbeing of the former that the existence of the race, as a whole, depends. The classes, or the chiefs, are, to use a paradox, independent, yet dependent on the masses. Their wants are supplied by the working-man, and the result is apparent. They are strong, robust, well-nourished, sleek, and contented—and well they may be—but their condition is assured at the cost of the people, who suffer from the constant calls made upon them for the benefit of their chiefs.

16. To suggest a remedy for this is a most difficult problem to solve. It is easy to find fault with a system, but it is hard to propose another to replace it. But one thing is clear,—if the Fijians as a race are to increase and hold their own with the other races now resident in the Colony, the present restrictive communal system must be greatly modified. The present Native Taxation Scheme is the backbone of the communal system. Abolish the former and the latter falls to the ground.

17. The hut-tax as applied to the natives of some of the South African Colonies is a subject worthy of consideration. Payment of taxes in cash or in kind should be optional, and the proceeds of a man's work should be protected from the rapacious greed of his chiefs.

18. To shortly summarise the cause and effect of the three reasons given above, they stand as follows:—

(i). Abolition of polygamy.

Effects—Overworking the mother and consequently neglect and death of the child.

(ii). Punishment for fornication.

Effects—Procuring abortion, thus destroying or injuring the child-bearing functions of the woman.

(iii). The restrictive nature of the communal system.

Effects—Disinclination on the part of both sexes to marry—Depreciation in the value of women as factors in the *matagali*—Utter apathy of the people as to whether they live or die—Keeping the people in their primitive state, thus checking their advancement.

19. The general result is, that it has now become a question of "Economy and probable extinction" *versus* "Expenditure and possible survival." The experience of the past decade frames a somewhat heavy indictment against the former.

I have, &c.,
HAMILTON HUNTER.

No. 28.

F. R. S. Baxendale, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Savusavu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Valeci, Savusavu Bay, 17 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. $\frac{2891}{1892}$, of the 30th December, inviting co-operation and expression of views on the subject of the Mortality of the Native Population.

In reply, I have the honour to state, that in my opinion the most predisposing cause of mortality of the native race is their constant intermarrying; but there are several other minor causes.

There can be no doubt that the natives of Fiji (as well as those of most of the Pacific Islands) are constantly intermarrying, and they must have been doing so for a long time past—though, perhaps, not so much as at present.

It is seldom, and with great difficulty that natives, except the higher chiefs, marry outside their districts. The effect of this constant intermarrying is feebleness of offspring, and I feel convinced that the great mortality amongst infants is principally due to this cause.

To bear this statement of mine out, I would call attention to the large families of half-caste parents, who are in a good many instances living under almost the same conditions as the natives. I have observed that the children of many such parents are very neglected. If the children are sick native medicines are given. No special food is provided for them, and in fact to all intents and purposes these children are on exactly the same footing as native children. They get the native diseases, such as *coko*, *cika*, *vidikoso*, and when older, elephantiasis, and yet the families remain large.

Again, take the case of native women living with Europeans of the lower class, who are poor or are too far away from stores, &c., to procure medicines and other comforts for the sick children, or, who having little love for (generally) illegitimate offspring leave them entirely to the care of the native mother. The additional vitality transmitted to these children by the admixture of blood seems to be able to carry them through their youthful sicknesses, and large families are the rule.

I regard as one of the minor causes of mortality amongst infants the objection that the majority of Fijian girls have to the cares of maternity. The child is a nuisance to them. It interferes with their pleasure and their duties, and the mothers attempt more than they can do, often at the expense of their offspring's health. Then, when the child is sick, the mother would—with the best intentions, but with utter ignorance of sanitary laws—if the child has a cold or a cough take it out with her day or night if she wished to go anywhere; and if the child has a fever, she will probably bathe it to cool it.

The usual native medicines being decoctions or infusions of herbs, &c., to be taken internally, cannot easily be given to small infants—other remedies being almost unknown—and so when they are sick their unaided constitutions have to fight against the disease.

In conclusion, under this head, I should like to say that I believe I am not traducing the native mother when I say that in the generality of cases of the death of infants the mother's grief is not very poignant.

I must now honestly confess, with regret, that I can at present suggest no scheme which seems to me to be practicable to prevent the inbreeding of the race, and I should imagine that legislation on this subject would be a very delicate matter. I think, however, that when a native of one province wishes to marry into another, difficulties should be swept away as far as possible, and not invented as I am inclined to think, that they are at present.

Sanitary knowledge might be improved by pamphlets issued by the Medical Department, in the native language, to the Bnls or even chiefs of villages, who might read them out at their meetings.

In connection with this, I am informed that the circular issued on epidemic influenza saved many lives; unfortunately it came too late to some of the districts or the chiefs did not trouble to spread the information it contained.

On the other hand, I believe that until the natives have more opportunities of appreciating the skill of medical men than they have in some places at present, they are not likely to abandon their old ways. I speak especially of the districts of Colo West and Cakaudrove (Vannalevu portion), with which I am more particularly acquainted, where no medical man, European or native, ever practises.

I have, &c.,
FRANCIS R. S. BAXENDALE.

No. 29.

Signor Alessandro Martelli, Planter, Koro, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Koro, 25 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular of the 3rd instant, and in reply, I beg to state that I have had under my consideration for many years past the subject referred to therein, viz., the Decrease of the Native Population of these islands, and, as a result of my observations, I have arrived at the following conclusions:—

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The infant mortality is, I consider, attributable to the total depravity of the juvenile population (the future fathers and mothers), and this is to be traced from the schools. I would suggest the necessity of the moral culture of the young being better attended to than under the present system of education by native teachers. At present these are powerless, and the amount of learning imparted is negative. This condition might be much ameliorated by the appointment of a Government Inspector of Native Schools, and by giving the teachers power to inflict corporal punishment where necessary. How can it be expected that kind mothers and considerate fathers will be raised by the present system?

Another thing which I consider a cause of mortality is the system pursued by the natives of holding continually recurring festivals or *soleus*, to which they resort in great numbers in their boats of European construction. At these they gorge themselves for weeks, and simply reduce their entertainers to poverty and starvation. On their return home their own gardens have also been neglected, and they are in many instances reduced to great privations, living on the root of the *yaka* and other innutritious articles. In consequence of this reaction from a continually distended state of the stomach, complaints are made of abdominal pains and pains of the stomach and back; and this state of things, especially with females, must be very prejudicial to themselves and their offspring.

The abuse of the *yagona* is also, I consider, very inimical to the health of the native race; and the consumption of the root is greatly on the increase. Many deaths have occurred, which I attribute solely to this cause. On the occasion of the *Bacchanalian* festivals referred to, a vast amount of this grog is drunk indiscriminately. The imposition of a tax upon this product, so as to put it beyond the reach of the native commoner would, I think, be beneficial in this direction.

It would be well if the native Chiefs, Rokos, and Bulis had inculcated upon them the necessity of setting a better example to their subordinates, and, instead of joining in all the excesses of their people, set an example of morality and abstinence, especially in the consumption of alcoholic liquors, which seem to be obtained with peculiar facility. The European Stipendiary Magistrates would also do much good, if, instead of merely acting in their magisterial capacity, and sitting upon the rostrum to administer justice only, they took a greater personal interest in their native charges, and gave them the advantage of their personal supervision and example in inculcating upon them the advantages of morality, sobriety, and good behaviour.

The above remarks are the result of my experience amongst the natives of Fiji during a residence of twenty-two years in the group.

In concluding the above remarks, I have to thank you for the receipt of your circular, and for remembering the name of one who lives in such a retired position.

Trusting that the above expression of my views on the subject may be acceptable.

I have, &c.,
A. MARTELLI.

No. 30.

John S. Dods, Esq., to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Valaga, Savusau Bay, East, 20 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Circular, No. ²⁵⁸₁₈₉₂, of the 30th December, inviting expression of ideas on the Mortality of Infant Native Population.

In reply, I have the honour to state that I am of opinion that there are several causes which tend to produce the evil complained of in circular, in evidence of which I would beg to call your attention to the matter of inbreeding. The great proportion of marriages which take place are by young people of the same town. It is seldom that they are from different towns of any great distance apart, and rarer still when one comes from another district or a long way apart.

It seems to me that inbreeding must be allowed by any one who has been long resident in the Colony, if it is so, then the great mortality of children is accounted for; not, but what, there are other and minor causes which all help to make it greater; for instance, there are those forced marriages—that is, marriages where young women are threatened and cajoled by their parents or relations, or both, into marrying persons whom they at first dislike, and after marriage hate. It can easily be believed, I think, that children of such unions do not get the care or attention necessary for their young lives, seeing that the mother must dislike them.

The prevention of such marriages would do away with a lot of other evils that follow in their wake, such as abortion, adultery, &c.

There are many smaller causes, which all help to swell the cause of mortality—such as, women going out to fish and other work too soon after confinement. They contract colds and other ailments, for which the child suffers; mothers thinking a walk in the cool of the evening the best for a child, which, perhaps, to a child means its death. Another will perhaps lay her feverish child on the damp grass to cool it in a fever, and so on.

In the way of practicable remedies, I am at a loss to suggest any. I fancy that if the Buli were to make it known that young men would have to find their wives from other towns than those in which they live; native ministers to celebrate no marriages except those approved of; and the Stipendiary Magistrate to see that no abuses crept in—then it might be a great improvement on the existing state of affairs.

These smaller causes could be reached by having printed forms, giving simple remedies for colds, fevers, epidemics, &c., sent to each town, with instructions for the teacher or *Turaga ni koro* to read them out to those who required its information.

I have, &c.,
JOHN S. DODS.

No. 31.

W. C. Reay, Esq., Inspector of Native Taxes, Ra, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Rakiraki, 27 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 283-1891, of the 30th December, 1891, and relating to the Mortality of the Native Race in this Colony.

Your letter would have received an earlier reply, but that I was just leaving Rakiraki when I received it, and have been absent since that time.

I have read the letter with careful attention, and my reply is embodied in a short report on the subject.

This subject has never before taken my serious attention; and as others more fitted to cope with such a serious and important question have studied it, I should have preferred leaving it entirely to them. I, therefore, respectfully offer what I have written for what it is worth.

I have, &c.,
WM. CHAS. REAY.

[REPORT ON THE MORTALITY OF FIJIANS.]

Rakiraki, 28 February, 1892.

YOUNG children, I think, require attention first, as the mortality amongst them seems to be very great.

In my opinion this is chiefly caused by neglect, insufficient nourishment, and utter indifference on the part of the parents.

A child's first year is, I believe, the most trying, and should it contract *coko* before teething its chances of life are very small. They invariably die. This is called *coko lule* down here.

I have not to my knowledge seen a parent giving a child any other nourishment than what it could derive from its mother, which may often not be good for it. Arrowroot, so easily procured by most natives, is never laid by for the children's use.

A great many children die after having had *coko*, which seems to weaken them so much that they have not vitality enough left. Cooked yam or taro may be given to the child in its rough state, and the child has not the desire to eat it, or the power to assimilate it, should it succeed in eating a portion. And this is all that it can hope for, perhaps.

Uncleanliness must also have a bad effect, as well as exposure to varying temperature with very little or no covering.

Taking the mortality generally, I think that native houses may have something to do with it.

The ordinary native house is little better than a hot-bed with the accumulation of rotten grass on which they sleep. Under the most favourable circumstances, where the house is well raised, the grass will be found mouldy underneath the mats.

Most of the houses in native villages are very slightly raised from the ground.

Pigs and weeds, as a rule, overrun the villages.

People die from simple causes, through ignorance of the complaint and the remedy, or are too indolent to procure the remedy until too late.

I have named a great many predisposing causes of mortality among the Fijian race, but the remedy I must leave to much wiser heads than mine; for to remedy all the causes I have named would entail a great deal of labour and expense.

My ideas may be wide of the mark, but I have only written of what has come under my notice.

WM. CHAS. REAY.

No. 32.

The Reverend William Allen, Wesleyan Missionary, Kadavu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Wesleyan Mission House, Kadavu,
10 February, 1892.

I am in receipt of your communication, dated 30th of December last, in which you stated that His Excellency the Governor desired "an expression of your views" respecting the alarming Mortality among Infants of the Native Population.

In reply, I beg to state that this is a subject in which I take a deep interest, and to which I have given some serious thought.

While unable to account fully for the alarming and abnormally high death-rate of infants of the native race, I humbly beg to submit for His Excellency's consideration the following, as accounting *in part*, I think, for the same.

Causes.

1. It is to be feared that there is a great deal of immorality at the present time with married women as well as single. Many mothers are not so anxious to suckle their children and attend to home duties now as formerly, because it interferes with their guilty pleasure. Hence many children sicken, and die, through neglect.

2. Many nursing mothers drink large quantities of *yagona* with the idea of increasing the flow of milk. This probably has an injurious effect on infants' welfare.

3. Formerly it was the custom to anoint the body of infants daily with oil, thereby fortifying them against the changes of temperature, &c. The abandonment of this good custom has probably increased the death-rate.

4. When the time draws near for their confinement, many women purposely carry huge loads of wood on their backs, lift heavy weights, or perform some unusually laborious task, with the idea it will give them a quick delivery. Hence premature confinements and still-born and sickly offspring.

5. I am inclined to think that since the introduction of Christianity and settled government, illicit intercourse among the sexes has very greatly increased. Being released from the barbarous club law, living under the mild and humane laws of Christianity and settled government, with no healthy public opinion among themselves on such matters to deter them, many have abused their present liberty, using it as an occasion for lasciviousness.

Science teaches that were promiscuous intercourse permitted the human race would perish from neglect of offspring and universal sterility.

In degree, Fiji is suffering from this to-day.

6. Since the Fijians are no longer in danger of being eaten by their enemies, many seem to think that there is now no good reason why they should be prolific and try to rear a large family. Hence very many married women (so it is generally reported) drink an herb, well known to themselves, to prevent pregnancy or to procure abortion. This habit which is very prevalent here (according to report) keeps the birth-rate low.

7. Doubtless, of latter years, numbers of children have died through foreign diseases, for which the Fijian knows no cure.

Recommendations.

1. It would be helpful if a list of the poisonous herbs of the Colony were made, and printed for circulation among the people generally. By this means the purely native doctors (and nearly every adult pretends to be such) would be put on their guard in preparing their medicines. Let the use of all such herbs be prohibited.

I am strongly of the opinion that numbers of natives are fatally poisoned through drinking herbs, some of which they must know are of a highly dangerous nature.

2. Make it a law that every town keeps a supply of goats to provide milk for infants that may require it.

3. I believe that lasting good would result if a small pamphlet were prepared in the native language dealing with this subject, giving them healthy advice, and pointing out to them their duty to God, the State, their husbands, wives, and children. Doubtless, multitudes are sinning and injuring themselves through sheer ignorance. With more light these evils will probably diminish. Let (say) 6,000 or 8,000 copies of the pamphlet be printed for gratuitous distribution throughout Fiji.

I have, &c.,
WILLIAM ALLEN.

No. 33.

J. W. Philpott, Esq., to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

The Fiji Club, 2 March, 1892.

In answer to your Circular, in *re* Decrease of Native Race, I have the honour to say, briefly, that in my opinion this rapid decrease is mainly owing to the suppression of polygamy. In olden times—to treat this matter purely from an animal point of view—the best females of the race cohabited with, and bore children to the best and healthiest males of the race, viz., the chiefs and leading men; and, as a natural consequence, their progeny were robust and strong. These women, both before and after child-bearing, were comfortably housed and well fed and cared for, as the young and lower-class men of the tribe had to work for, and supply their chiefs' household with food, &c. These women are now the wives—and unfortunately too often the slaves—of these very low-class men, who, now that they are left to their own devices, are too lazy to work, and the women have, therefore, to do so, to provide food for themselves and families.

The physical and mental effects of this upon the women goes without saying. I am also of opinion, that the present taxation scheme is to some extent responsible. A great amount of time is wasted in arranging how and when this work is to be performed, and in going to and returning from the scene of their work. From a native point of view this is all work—and he readily persuades himself that he has had a very hard time of it, and is justly entitled to a rest, and leaves the cultivation of his gardens, &c., to his wife and family, with more or less disastrous results to them, both directly and indirectly.

I have, &c.,
J. W. PHILPOTT.

No. 34.

Charles Richard Swayne, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Lau, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Lomaloma, 15 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular letter of the 30th December, conveying His Excellency's desire to receive an expression of opinion as to the cause of the continued Decrease of the Native Population.

Having

Having carefully read the valuable information conveyed in your letter, I would respectfully submit the following in reply :—

The decrease of population of this province as shown annually by the returns of births and deaths, has, since the year 1882, been a subject of careful inquiry and discussion in the Provincial Meetings.

Attention was more particularly directed in former years to a reduction of the death-rate, and much has been done to improve the sanitary state of the towns.

Eight towns have been shifted to better and more salubrious sites, and many other improvements have been made.

Of late years the native feeling is that the decrease is not so much due to an abnormal death-rate as to the paucity of births, so many apparently strong and healthy women having no children; and to meet this view of the case the several District Meetings have from time to time made rules in the direction of controlling the young people, but without much success in the direction intended. Natives in Council assembled pass rules, which they trouble little about afterwards.

The decrease of population in this province is, I believe, not attributable to insanitary conditions of life, though I am inclined to believe that the old and inconvenient sites of their towns upon the hills were more conducive to health than those which they occupy on the coast.

The Vital Statistics given on page 5 of your letter show the abnormal rate of mortality among infants.

This mortality has been ascribed to the want of care and proper nutrition of infants by their mothers, and there is no doubt it is justly ascribed to that cause in a great number of cases; yet, as the native women now enjoy conditions of life far in advance of those prevailing before Fiji came under British rule, the evil may, I think, be sought rather in the incapacity of the women for their maternal duties than in the conditions of married life preventing their fulfilling those duties.

The mortality among infants may, I think, be traced rather to the number of weakly, sickly, infants born, than to any want of proper care and attention on the part of the mothers of the infants.

I would respectfully submit that I have formed the opinion, that the decrease in population is fundamentally due to the paucity of marriages of young men and women upon reaching a marriageable age.

Early marriage may, I think, be taken as the most natural and suitable for natives of the tropics living under civilised rule.

The causes, which from my observation seem to militate against early marriage and settlement of young natives are :—First and chiefly, the constant and intimate association on equal terms of the sexes in the town schools—girls, as a rule, attending school till they have exceeded a marriageable age. Secondly, the obstacles to early marriages too often raised by parents and guardians, either through some selfish desire to retain the services of the young man or woman, or because the desired connection does not meet their views.

I have, &c.,

C. R. SWAYNE.

No. 35.

G. W. A. Lynch, Esq., M.D., &c., District Medical Officer, Taviuni, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir, .

Taviuni, Fiji, 20 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter, No. $\frac{278}{1892}$, referring to the Decrease of the Native Population.

My length of residence in the Colony having been, so far, a brief one, I have only had opportunities of making observations in a single district, that of Taviuni; my remarks, therefore, must be taken as applying chiefly to that island.

1. Predisposing causes of infant mortality.

These may, I think, be divided in the first instance into two classes, which, however, depend very much one on the other :—

A. Effects of bad hygienic conditions.

B. Effects of disease.

A.—Effect of bad hygienic conditions.

- (a) Sites of towns : In spite of what you say in your letter as to removal of towns to healthier sites, I find that in a great many instances in Taviuni the positions of towns are pre-eminently unhealthy and, from a health point of view, bad. They are placed for the most part either in, or in close proximity to swamps, or swampy ground which is badly drained or not drained at all. The result of this is, that in rainy weather there are stagnant drains or pools, either actually in the towns or in their close vicinity; which pools only dry after a period of dry weather. Of course, there will be present in the pools the products of decomposing vegetation, and there are frequently to be noted smells arising from such decompositions. The towns of Wai Lagi, Lovo ni Vono, and Wairiki are instances of this.

- (b) Houses : These are found, especially in the case of the poorer natives, to be often small, too close to the ground, and ill-ventilated. In some cases the floor is barely raised from the level of the surrounding earth. If these houses are in any way in a low-lying district, they must needs be damp and unwholesome during the wet season. With a single small opening as a door, and often at night closed upon too large a number of sleepers, the atmosphere must be unwholesome in a very high degree, which must of necessity aggravate minor ailments, whether in children or adults.

(c)

- (c) Dirt: In the poorer houses before mentioned, one cannot fail to be struck with the generally unclean condition of things.
- (d) Carelessness: In respect of the minor ailments of children or adults. In the vast majority of cases of illness among the natives that I have been asked to see in their own towns, I find that they are either very trivial in nature, or else so serious as to be past medical aid. Presumably in the latter case the postponement is due to the lack of faith in European drugs, since one is only applied to as a last resource. There appears, too, to be a great deal of apathy in regard to infants and their illnesses, as though the life of an infant were of small or no consequence.
- (e) Drinking water: Often used from sources which are stagnant or nearly so. In a prolonged dry season, such as the winter of 1891, pure and good drinking water must have been very difficult to procure.
- (f) Diet: Improper feeding of infants after they are weaned.

(In regard to sites of towns, I may quote as an instance the town of Tavuki, in Kadavu, which I have had an opportunity of seeing. There are ditches all through and all round this town, which is of large size. The tide washes away refuse, but at low-water there is a large surface of black mud, the odour from which is very bad).

B.—Disease. This is closely dependent on conditions of life and living before mentioned.

In the register of deaths for the province of Cakaudrove, the preponderating causes of infant mortality are abdominal diseases, dysentery, (?) thrush (*macake*), and diarrhoea. That is in a period of two years that I have examined. I cannot but think that all these diseases, and perhaps others, are due, in a degree greater than less, to some one or other of the causes specified as hygienic.

To deal with a sick Fijian in his own town is a matter of great difficulty, unless the case happens to be a surgical one. In a case where drugs are of use, one finds that a bottle of medicine will be used, and if there is not complete cure after this, the patient will in all likelihood return in disgust to native treatment. I mention this because, I think, that in spite of their proximity to civilisation, their Christianity, and partial education, the natives still cling to a great extent to many old forms and superstitions, which time and more education alone will dispose of finally. This is more in reference to the whole question of decrease of population.

Vaguely one hears of the practice of abortion, with little or no evidence to convict. But information on this point is so limited that I can do no more than mention it. The large number of still-births would, however, appear to strengthen the supposition that the practice is far from infrequent, and it is to be supposed that for each still-birth noted there may be several of which no mention is made, since they take place in the earlier months of pregnancy. What may be termed "Polynesian Fatalism" may be taken as a factor in increasing the death-rate; for one has seen several instances, not only in Fijians but in other Polynesians, where a patient has apparently been getting well of his illness, but he and his friends think that he must die, and he dies.

2. What remedies are practicable?

- (a) Continuing the removal of towns to healthier sites.
- (b) Moving the smaller towns, which are often only a few houses into the larger ones, in order that there may be closer supervision in regard to matters of cleanliness and general hygiene by the head-men of the town.
- (c) Increased stringency in the application of the laws in the case of abortion, both for the procurer and the person for whom it is procured. These I regard as the main points that are practicable.

Such other remedies as one could suggest could only be effected after long years of education and increased civilisation; and these remedies will no doubt be spontaneously adopted by the people as they know more and have more money to improve their conditions.

I have made my remarks with great diffidence owing to my comparatively recent arrival in Fiji.

I have, &c.,
G. W. A. LYNCH.

No. 36.

J. V. Tarte, Esq., Planter, Vuna, Taviuni, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Vatu Were, Taviuni, Fiji, 27 February, 1892

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular, *re* the Mortality of Fijian Children.

I may mention that it is a subject I do not feel myself qualified to speak of, although at the same time I am quite aware that the percentage of deaths amongst the infants is far more than it should be. This I attribute—

1st.—Principally to the want of care of their parents towards them until they are of an age to take care of themselves, having often noticed that the mother will successfully rear the first one, or perhaps two but after that they appear to think the trouble and bother of them is too great, more especially if they are girls and at all sickly. They die from neglect.

Boys are from custom taken more care of, as in the old days, when the tribal wars were on, they were required for fighting and taking care of their women and towns.

Even this, however, is dying out fast. Only a short time ago a Fijian lost his wife leaving a young baby. The father came to my house, told me what had occurred, and asked how he should rear the little one.

Mrs. Tarte gave him a feeding-bottle and some milk, and told him she would give him more each morning if he would come for it. This he did for a few days and then stopped, and the baby died shortly

shortly after. I point this case out as it came under my personal observation. And it is to this utter want of filial affection and care that I think is one great cause of the great mortality amongst infants.

2nd.—When a young child has any little ailment, Fijian mothers, as a rule, have little or no idea what to do to assist its recovery, and these ailments are becoming very frequent, which forcibly suggests the idea that the Fijians, as a race, are nothing like so strong and robust as they were.

Even the adults when they become ill do not now appear to have the stamina and strength to fight against it, and very easily succumb, without they happen to be under the care of a European.

Another thing that, perhaps, makes it more striking of late years is, that the men are all *lotu'd* and have only one wife, whereas they formerly practised polygamy and had several, and each wife would have two or three children; and, perhaps, from a spirit of emulation they would try and rear them, and did so, as it was not at all uncommon for a man then to have ten or twelve and *rear them*; but, that I think, is rarely seen now with the one wife.

Of course, great improvements might be made in the sites and cleanliness of their towns, but this I presume, the medical officer is aware of.

I have, &c.,
J. V. TARTE.

No. 37.

Alexander Eastgate, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Taviuni, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Stipendiary Magistrate's Office,
Taviuni, 3 March, 1892.

Sir,

I have the honour in reply to your Circular letter of the 30th December, 1891, relative to the Decrease in the number of the Native Population of Fiji, to offer the following remarks and suggestions:—

1. In view of the opinions held and expressed by those so well qualified to judge, I am very diffident in expressing an opinion as to the causes which operate in the direction of causing the decrease referred to, but I suggest that with all the care bestowed and Regulations made for the improvement of the sanitary conditions of the villages, as well as peace and good order resulting from a settled government, that it is reasonable to suppose a certain check to the causes existing in former days prevails; yet, notwithstanding, it is presumed the decrease is progressive.

2. A close observation extending over many years has convinced me that the women of Fiji do not possess the maternal instinct to the same extent or degree found in more civilised peoples. They do not care to have children, or, if any, few.

3. I am of opinion that one strong reason for the above is that the labour imposed upon the women in many parts of the group makes the care of children a burden to them.

4. I am convinced that abortion is practised to a large extent. In many cases I fear successfully. And many, if not most attempts, result in injuring the constitutions of the women, and thus, when children are born, they are weakly and die.

5. I have been assured, over and over, by all sorts and conditions of men, that girls of tender age are frequently trifled with and abused, thus injuring them and causing weakness in after years.

6. In addition to the direct influences, I respectfully state that there are many irritating causes which induce unrest and irritation among the whole population, arising chiefly from want of knowledge; indiscretion, or arbitrary assumed power on the part of the Native Officials in administering the affairs entrusted to them. This may appear a somewhat strange suggestion from an European point of view as a cause for a decrease in population, and more especially a mortality amongst infants; but I submit that a knowledge of the Fijian's character and mode of thought and feeling warrants a belief, that where his mind is under unkindly influences the body is most seriously affected.

7. The insanitary condition of many villages, with decaying dwellings, holes, and dykes with stagnant water, decaying refuse, and other abominations are also to my mind serious, and pregnant influences affecting the mortality of both adults and children. There are thousands of children born in huts wherein the effluvium from decaying grass and mats must be poisonous.

8. Having pointed thus to some of those things which suggest to my mind causes for the mortality, I beg to offer some suggestions as remedies.

9. It should be absolutely forbidden that women should perform any other than purely domestic work.

10. I am of opinion that women should not be punished for either fornication or adultery, the fear of punishment being, in my opinion, the reason in many instances for attempts to procure abortion. It may be argued that non-punishment will induce greater immorality. I think not. And if the assertions made by those whose special duty it is to inculcate and teach morality be reliable, I fail to see how it be possible to conceive a much worse state than at present exists. I do not hold the opinion that immorality is so rampant with the native women as it is often represented. While making the evil of adultery and fornication non-punishable on the woman, I am of opinion that a penalty should be inflicted on the man in the form of compensation to either the parents of a girl seduced or to the husband where adultery is committed, and it can be shown that loss or damage has been sustained.

11. I have for eighteen years had every opportunity, in several provinces, of watching the administration of Native Affairs by native officials. I have endeavoured under all circumstances to advise and teach men of all ranks that the aim and object of government is the good and wellbeing of the people, their preservation and happiness. I am to-day confirmed in my opinion that it is not possible to conserve the rights of, or elevate the people, and preserve them without the more direct control being in the hands of intelligent Europeans.

12. I am of opinion that at any rate there should be no delay in giving authority to the European officers in the provinces to insist on improved sanitation and erection of habitable dwellings; they should be the head of a Board of Health, consisting of two or three intelligent natives. The present machinery has proved wanting. I have heard the Bulis, at their meeting, when questioned as to the state of their villages, roads, and plantations, report exactly the reverse of what I knew to be case. I have never known a challenge as to the veracity of such reports, and when I have had an opportunity of speaking on the subject the idea has been expressed, that it is a *ka vaka Vavalagi*. An old chief quite lately suggested that I wanted them to wash their towns with soap, and this, consequent on my not being able to endure the stench in a house I was taken into to sleep. This illustrates the idea I have, that the large bulk of Fijians cannot possibly be judges of what cleanliness means or necessitates, hence the necessity for the assistance I suggest.

I have, &c.,
ALEX. EASTGATE.

No. 38.

T. F. Burness, Esq., Planter, Caboni, Ra, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Caboni, 26 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Circular of February 3rd, referring to the rapid Decrease of the Natives of this group. In answer thereto, I may say that I have noticed with great regret the number of natives passing away, and the smallness of the rising generation to replace them; in fact the Fijian race is positively retrograding in health, in numbers, and in character. At the same time, I believe it is in the power of the Government to check to a certain extent the enormous death-rate. I need hardly say that it is utterly useless to simply advise natives to adopt anything out of their own groove, and any plan the Government may adopt, must be done through pressure. I beg to offer a few suggestions for the Government's consideration—any of which, I feel satisfied, would help to assist the object the Government has in view.

First.—Every native town should be intrusted to always have on hand a good supply of castor oil, that article being in my opinion the simplest and best medicine for general use, either for infants, children, or adults; the natives being supplied with proper measure according to age.

Second.—Charcoal: Fortunately for Fiji that made from cocoanut-shells is one of the best charcoals known for medicinal purposes. Dysentery being one of the complaints that carries off a great number of natives, I would suggest that the natives be instructed, that upon the first appearance of dysentery they should immediately burn half a cocoanut-shell, well pound it, mix with water and drink it. And I firmly believe in the majority of cases this would cure them.

Third.—Salt: I think the natives should be induced to use more salt than they do.

Fourth.—Water: I believe that a great deal of the sickness arises from the impurity of the water they drink. If the Government could only induce the natives to boil the water before using it for drinking purposes it would be to their advantage.

Fifth.—Houses: The natives should be compelled to build the following kind of house:—Roof the same as at present, but from the wall-plate down to the ground should be double reeded only, instead of grass as at present. This would give them both light and air instead of the dark and ill-ventilated houses they now have.

The above are a few simple remedies, which if adopted, I feel sure, would tend greatly to benefit the natives of this group.

I have, &c.,
T. F. BURNES.

No. 39.

James McConnell, Esq., Vuna, Taviuni, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Ardmore Hall, Vuna,

Fiji, 24th February, 1892.

I have given much consideration to the request contained in your Circular, dated the 3rd instant, issued by direction of His Excellency the Governor, "asking for an opinion and recommendations about the general question of Native Mortality in Fiji."

1. I venture, respectfully, to express a doubt that the Governor (and the Colony) cannot expect a reliable and independent opinion from many of the persons to whom he has probably directed these circulars to be sent. For instance, Managers of Sugar Estates and Shipping Companies cannot be expected to express their opinion candidly, because it is their interest and their duty to their employers to conciliate the Government and the Civil Servants.

His Excellency is generally credited with being responsible for the present policy; and I venture to think it is a grievously mistaken policy, and has greatly retarded the progress of Fiji. It would, I believe, be easy to prove that this policy has been, and is, the chief cause of the continuance of the excessive "Native mortality." I have no doubt that most of those good people (and others) will send you, for His Excellency, very consoling and pleasing letters. I would like to have the pleasure of examining some of the writers before an intelligent and impartial tribunal.

I, therefore, deeply regret (and every man having an interest in Fiji must share that feeling) that the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies has not been requested to appoint a Royal Commission of two or more eminent Australian colonists—some of those gentlemen who have done

so much to make Australia a nation—to take evidence with a view to having an impartial opinion as to the diminution of the native race—and I might add the white population—in these extremely healthy and fertile islands possessing many advantages over that of the tropical portions of Australia. I am convinced that the Report and conclusions of the Commissioners would be adverse to the policy of the Government.

2. His Excellency has no doubt considered it desirable to classify Fiji with those of Tonga Samoa, Tahiti, and Hawaii, for he says, “the decrease of the Native Population in the Pacific is not less remarkable and painful than it is certain.” His Excellency evidently overlooks the fact that the places named, each one is ruled by a semi-savage through a poor and feeble Government. This is a British Colony, and a thousand-fold superior results have been expected to follow in Fiji, because possessed by power of Government to enforce reform in every direction. Her Majesty’s Administrators in Fiji, presumably are amongst the most capable men in the world, possessing a much higher ideal of what is equitable, just, and necessary for the progress and advancement of all classes in these islands than can be possibly expected from the King of Tonga or the Government of Hawaii. If the results in Fiji are only equal to those obtained under uncultured, untrained, and semi-savage rulers, surely there must be something amiss in the legislation for, or administration of, this Colony. The reason we are not far ahead of our less enlightened neighbours I take it to be,—that Fiji is a Crown Colony, ruled by an irresponsible Government. I anticipated, and most people, black and white, expected, that with the establishment of British rule in Fiji some serious attempt would have been made to arrest the decay of the Fijian race, and—

- (a) That an effort would be made to elevate the masses ;
- (b) That individual merit would be recognised ;
- (c) That each man’s property would be secured by law, so that it could not be taken from him without compensation.

But we have been doomed to disappointment. The Government, I would make bold to assert, has followed a line of policy, which

“That in a Nation bowed with woe
No other blessing could bestow,
Than to confirm and rivet fast
The tyranny of ages past.”

The Rev. Lorimer Fison very correctly says “That the causes of the decrease must be looked for elsewhere than in Polygamy.” He evidently had in his mind similar ideas to those held and so honestly set forth by the Rev. J. Rooney. Nearly all the missionaries have looked “elsewhere” for the decay of the native race, and so far as I know, they have indorsed the opinion expressed by Mr. Rooney. That gentleman thinks the principal causes of the degradation of the Fijian populace entailing increased mortality to be—

- (1) Working for their chiefs, so that they have neither time nor inclination to attend to their towns.
- (2) “The present system of Native taxation, though acceptable to the chiefs—usually placing, as it does, a large amount at their disposal—is irksome and distasteful to the people. To have their tax when proffered in cash refused, and be compelled to work several months every year on the Government plantations, they regard as slavery. In addition to the tax which the people pay the Government the chiefs are allowed to levy upon them for any, and every, thing they may require. The rule of the chiefs, always arbitrary and despotic, is now more oppressive than ever. The check to the despotism of a chief, which formerly existed in the fear that his people might leave him in a time of war and go over to the enemy, is now removed ; and the chiefs, backed up by the British Government, are more tyrannical, and the down-trodden people greater slaves, than ever they were. Woe be to him who complains of oppression. He is thenceforth a marked man. He obtains neither redress nor protection from the Government, and is trebly punished by his incensed chief. Abundant evidence can be produced to substantiate the facts here stated. Such being the state of things, is it any wonder that the people are becoming reckless and demoralised ? It is not unusual to hear them say that they prefer death to their present bondage. And if they do not actually commit suicide, yet they habitually neglect those precautions necessary to the preservation of health and life.”

On Taviuni and Vanualevu the Fijian crops of cocoanuts have been always worked up to provide for the payment of the annual assessment. The tabu is on the cocoanuts eleven months in the year, leaving the people without means to provide for their clothing and other requirements.

3. An old colonist, I have given the subject careful attention, and I agree with Mr. Rooney that these are the main causes which have impoverished the Fijian race. The “Tax experiment,” so correctly explained, has been carried out (and worked at) for sixteen years in defiance of many protests sent to the Colonial Office. Can any one then be surprised that the Fijian is without hope, through British rule having been to him very little less than tyrannical bondage—the Government having failed to protect him in the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour. The people are simply the slaves of a few[chiefs, ninety-nine (99) per cent. of whom are not to be trusted with credit to the extent of five pounds sterling.

That the Fijian race have become poor, miserable, degraded, and degenerate, does not, to my mind admit of question. The women have now few children ; and of those few, according to your circular, forty-four (44) per cent. of them are allowed to die prematurely, clearly indicating that the people feel their humiliating position very acutely.

Reform.

- 1. A more satisfactory state of affairs can only be secured by the establishment of an improved form of legislature having, like Natal and some of the West Indian Islands, a Legislative Assembly. The

Governor

Governor might have ten nominees if he desired, but the white population should have the right to return at least three members and the natives two.

- (a) The advantages would be,—the Colonial Office would always hear both sides of every question :
- (b) The Elective Members would be responsible to the Colony if they allowed, without protest, the passing of any crude legislation, or the sacrificing, destroying, or making subordinate the interests of any one island out of consideration for some spot of less importance elsewhere, but favoured because it being the proposed site of some Government pet scheme.
2. The Fijian tax experiment must be abolished.
3. The Fijian race protected from being harassed as at present, and an effort made to secure them from the rapacity of any high (or low) chief, who must be bound by law to pay for all his requirements.
4. An effort made to elevate the people—securing to each the fruits of his (or her) industry ; recognising individual right and merit ; inspiring all with some encouragement to work, by granting them something to live, and a prospect to hope for.

I have, &c.,

JAMES McCONNELL.

No. 40.

T. B. Mathews, Esq., Planter, Rewa, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Burlton Estate, Rewa River, 1 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication, under date 31st January last, in which you state His Excellency asks for an expression of my views on the cause of the Decrease of the Native Population, and practical remedies.

As His Excellency is pleased to surmise, the general question of native mortality has been forcibly brought under my notice since my first arrival in the Colony—twenty-two years ago. In the different parts of the group that I have visited, nothing has caused me greater surprise than the evidences of a rapid decrease of the Fijian race that everywhere presented themselves. The sites of large towns, whose inhabitants have passed away, many within my own recollection, are met with in all directions, and villages once populous are now dwindling in population.

Consideration given to this subject leads me to concur with the opinion expressed by Mr. Lorimer Fison and quoted by you, “that the Fijians were decreasing in numbers before the earliest white settlers came among them.” I find it impossible to arrive at a satisfactory reason for the decline in population, when the conditions existing among the native race prior to the period when this great mortality commenced are unknown to us. But in my own mind attribute it chiefly to a want of stamina in the women, their habits of long-continued fishing, when they are sometimes exposed for many hours at a time with wet sulus round their loins, which, particularly during the cold months, must be provocative of injurious effects, particularly to those pregnant. Again, the food of women suckling infants and young children is not sufficiently nourishing to impart the requisite vigour of constitution.

From the statistics you have been pleased to furnish me with, it is gratifying to notice that a change in the right direction is apparent, which I conceive to be due in a great degree to improvements in sanitary laws and to a more contented feeling that has gradually been engendered in the native mind by wise treatment on the part of the Government. I think if a feeling of individuality and self-reliance can be established in the mind of the Fijian, with a desire to acquire property and save money independent of interference from chiefs, a great step will be made in establishing a stronger desire for offspring, and must intensify the wish on the part of parents to adopt the safest modes of treatment for the general health and wellbeing of young children, and any measures that could be taken to gradually encourage the desire and ability to substitute milk and farinaceous food as nutriment for suckling-women and young children would, I think, be attended with a marked decline in the death-rate among infants.

I have, &c.,

T. B. MATHEWS.

No. 41.

Very Reverend Father Bertreux, S.M., Catholic Mission, Loreto, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Monsieur le Gouverneur,

Loreto, 17 Février, 1892.

J'ai lu avec le plus grand intérêt la Circulaire que vous m'avez fait adresser, concernant les résultats du mouvement de la population de Fiji pendant ces dernières années.

Je suis heureux de voir les pouvoirs publics s'occuper de cette grave question, et chercher des remèdes pour arrêter le dépeuplement de ces îles.

Cette affaire me semble d'autant plus urgente que la mortalité fait maintenant des ravages encore plus effrayants que par le passé parmi les enfants indigènes.

De toutes les parties de l'Archipel mes confrères m'écrivent que jamais ils n'ont vu tant de maladies et de décès, et les dernières statistiques que je reçois attestent en même temps que le nombre des naissances est extrêmement petit.

Ce n'est pas là un simple accident pouvant provenir d'une cause passagère telle que l'influenza, car avant même l'apparition de cette épidémie, j'avais déjà constaté que le nombre des décès l'emportaient sur celui des naissances au moins dans plusieurs parties de l'Archipel.

Avant

Avant de répondre aux questions posées dans la circulaire et qui regardent la mortalité parmi les enfants, je me perusets de placer ici quelques considérations générales.

1°. Je ne crois pas qu'on doive attribuer cette décadence de la race Fidjienne à la forme du gouvernement, aux conditions politiques actuelles du pays et aux lois qui régissent la colonie.

2°. J'aime à reconnaître que le Gouvernement a beaucoup fait dans l'intérêt des Fidjiens et spécialement pour améliorer leur situation au point de vue de l'hygiène.

3°. On a dit que les charges budgétaires imposées aux indigènes par le Gouvernement étaient trop lourdes, exigeaient des travaux trop pénibles, des absences trop prolongées pendant les quelles les mères de familles et leurs enfants étaient délaissés, et on a eru que c'était là une des causes de la mortalité qui frappe les enfants. Pour moi je trouve ces accusations exagérées. Si quelque réforme est nécessaire sous ce rapport je crois qu'elle devrait porter sur les *lala* continuels dont certains chefs Fidjiens harassent leurs sujets.

4°. J'ignore quelles peuvent être les vraies causes de la diminution de la population. Je ne saurais donc proposer de remèdes.

Qu'il me soit permis cependant de proposer quelques conseils :—

- (a) En général les jeunes gens attendent trop longtemps avant de se marier. Il serait préférable de les voir s'établir *jeunes* et fonder des familles dès qu'ils ont atteint l'âge de 20 à 25 ans.
- (b) Une des causes qui retarde l'établissement des jeunes gens est la difficulté qu'ils ont à se proeurer les richesses nécessaires, pour obtenir les filles qu'ils désirent épouser. Il faudrait faire disparaître peu à peu ce vieil usage Fidjien.
- (c) Les mariages sont souvent retardés et quelquefois même empêchés pour des *raisons futilles*. Un parent très-éloigné, un membre du *mataqali*, un chef quelconque s'opposent au mariage de tel jeune homme avec telle jeune fille sans aucune raison sérieuse. Ce cas est très fréquent.
- (d) Quand le mariage est célébré, les conjoints sont quelquefois très longtemps avant de cohabiter, parce que le mari n'a pas encore trouvé assez de richesses pour satisfaire l'avidité des parents de sa femme.

Il faudrait faire disparaître ces abus et faciliter les mariages et l'établissement des familles.

Pour en venir aux questions posées dans la circulaire, je puis sentement répondre que j'ignore la vraie cause de la grande mortalité qui frappe les enfants indigènes.

J'en accuse d'une manière générale l'*insouciance* des parents : insouciance pour soupçonner et prévenir le mal, insouciance aussi pour soigner le patient quand le mal a déjà fait son apparition.

C'est cette insouciance qui empêche les Fidjiens de suivre les conseils hygiéniques si souvent donnés par tous ceux qui leur portent intérêt. Ils savent les précautions à prendre, les soins à donner mais pratiquement ils les négligent.

Cette négligence et ce manque de soins font que les indigènes vivent continuellement dans des conditions hygiéniques mauvaises, et c'est ce qui a donné lieu à ce lymphatisme général qui en atteint un si grand nombre et dont tant d'enfants sont victimes.

J'ai remarqué que la mortalité sévit surtout sur les enfants lorsqu'ils sont atteints du *coko*. C'est pendant cette période très critique qu'il faudrait leur prodiguer des soins éclairés, et observer à leur égard toutes les règles de l'hygiène. Le moindre changement de température, le plus petit refroidissement suffit pour faire rentrer le *coko* à l'intérieur et ce cas est presque toujours fatal. Or, j'ai remarqué dans maintes circonstances que les parents ne prennent pas assez de soins pour éviter ces refroidissements subits, et leurs enfants sont victimes de leur négligence.

Négligence encore pour prendre les moyens de salubrité nécessaires pour ce qui regarde les *habitations*, la *nourriture*, les *vêtements*.

Négligence dans les maladies épidémiques pour isoler ceux qui en sont les premiers atteints et pour éviter la contagion.

Insouciance de la mère qui ne sait pas se priver de tabac et d'aliments qu'elle reconnaît cependant comme nuisibles à l'enfant qu'elle allaite.

Enfin je regarde comme une cause de la grande mortalité des enfants les *wainimate* ou remèdes Fidjiens mal administrés, par des personnes absolument incapables de diagnostiquer le mal.

E. M. BERTREUX.

[Translation.]

To the Governor,—

Loreto, 17 February, 1892.

Sir,

I have read with the greatest interest the Circular that you have had addressed to me concerning the results of the changes in the population of Fiji during these last years.

I am glad to see that the authorities are now occupied with this grave question, and seeking remedies to arrest the depopulation of these islands.

This appears to me all the more urgent because the mortality among the native children is making more fearful ravages than in the past.

From all parts of the Archipelago my colleagues write to me that they have never seen so much illness, and so many deaths; and the last statistics that I have received attest at the same time that the number of births is extremely small.

This is not a simple accident due to a passing cause, such as influenza, for even before the appearance of this epidemic I had remarked that the number of deaths exceeded the number of births in not a few parts of the Archipelago.

Before answering any of the questions propounded in the circular with regard to the mortality among children, I venture to note a few general considerations:—

1. I do not believe that this decadence of the Fijian race should be attributed to the form of government, or to the existing political condition of the country, or to the laws in force in the Colony.

2.

2. I have pleasure in recognising that the Government has done a great deal in the interests of the Fijians, especially in ameliorating their sanitary condition.

3. It has been said that the financial charges imposed on the natives by the Government are too heavy, entailing labour of too severe a character, prolonged absences, during which mothers and children are neglected, and it has been thought that this is one of the causes for the mortality among children. For my own part I find these charges exaggerated. If any reform is necessary on this account, I think it should be in the direction of checking the continual *lala* with which certain Fijian chiefs harass their subjects.

4. I am ignorant of the real cause of the diminution of the native population, and I can therefore propose no remedies.

Let me be allowed, nevertheless, to make certain suggestions:—

- (a) Young men generally wait too long before marrying. It would be better if they established themselves while young, and founded families from the age of from twenty to twenty-five.
- (b) One of the causes that retard the establishment of young men is the difficulty they experience in acquiring the property necessary for obtaining the girls they wish to marry. It would be well to abolish by degrees this old Fijian custom.
- (c) Marriages are often retarded, and even prevented, for trivial reasons. Some distant relation, a member of the *matagali*, some chief or other, is opposed to the marriage of a certain man to a certain girl without any serious reason. This case is of frequent occurrence.
- (d) When the marriage is celebrated the couple are often a long time before they cohabit because the man has not yet acquired sufficient property to satisfy the avidity of his wife's relations. This abuse should be done away with, and marriages and the establishment of families should be facilitated.

To return to the question propounded in the circular. I can only answer that I am ignorant of the real cause of the great mortality that strikes at the native children. I accuse in a general way the indifference shown by the parents, indifference in foreseeing and preventing the evil, indifference also in nursing the patient when the illness has made its appearance. It is this indifference that prevents the Fijians from following the sanitary advice so often given by all those who are interested in them. They know the precautions they should take and the care they should bestow, but in practice they neglect them. This negligence and want of care cause the natives to live continually under unwholesome conditions, and it is what has given rise to the lymphatic condition which has affected so large a number, and of which so many children are victims.

I have remarked that the mortality is most severe on the children attacked by *coko*. It is during this very critical period that they ought to be well and intelligently cared for, and that all the rules of health ought to be applied to them. The least change of temperature, the slightest chill, is enough to drive the *coko* back, and in this case it is nearly always fatal. I have often remarked that the parents do not take enough care to avoid these sudden chills, and their children are victims of their negligence; negligence again in adopting necessary sanitary precautions in the matter of dwellings, diet, and clothing; negligence in times of epidemics in not isolating the first sufferers, and in not avoiding infection; negligence on the part of the mother, who cannot deprive herself of tobacco and diet which she knows will be hurtful to the child she is suckling.

Lastly, I regard as a cause of the mortality among children the *vainimate*, or Fijian medicine, wrongly administered by persons quite incapable of diagnosing the complaint.

I have, &c.,
E. M. BERTREUX.

No. 42.

Stuart Black, Esq., Selialevu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Selialevu, Fiji, 26 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular, dated 3rd instant, respecting the Decrease of the Native Population of this Colony. It is with the greatest diffidence I respond to His Excellency's request for an expression of my views on the subject which requires most careful research and years of close attention to determine the real cause of the rapid decadence of this fine and interesting race of people.

I have long thought that the secret of the extraordinary falling away of the inhabitants might chiefly be traced to the segregation of the various tribes, whose intense conservatism prevents them from mixing. Since Annexation, the Government of this Colony, aiming at retaining for the Fijians their traditions relating to their manners and customs, as far as it deemed consistent with modern civilisation and the assessment of taxes in kind, made it (I presume) the basis of its Native Policy to keep the tribes apart—more strictly than before—by the appointment of Rokos, the establishment of home districts, defined by the old tribal boundaries of creeks, rivers, mountain chains, watersheds, headlands, and islands; and the prohibitory measures enacted, disallowing the members of the one district to reside in any other than the one to which they hereditarily belong; consequently all the families in each tribe are too closely allied to each other. Hence their blood is becoming stagnant and their productiveness effete. Were the natives of all the districts encouraged to mix, a beneficial effect with regard to their fertility would naturally ensue. Nor could it be urged that the union would produce hybrids—belonging as they do to one race—*kai Viti*. I mention hybrids, because it is a rule in anthropology, that animal hybrids, though easily produced, becomes less fertile when produced. All the members of a tribe resemble each other in physique and bodily peculiarities, and as heredity acts more vigorously on the body than the mind, any regression of their productive powers will be transmitted to their offspring, who will

will be less fertile when produced—as in the case of hybrids. If to this reasoning be added the ethnological hypothesis, that “when civilisation and barbarism come in contact, the option which natural law gives to the less advanced race is a stern one—it must accept civilisation, or rather the rule of the civilised race—or perish,” some light may be thrown on the *rapid* decrease of the Fijians.

With reference to the mortality among infants. It is in a great measure owing to the careless nursing and treatment they receive at the hands of their parents. The Fijians are fond of their infants, especially the mothers, therefore, they cannot be accused of culpably neglecting them while in their tender infancy, though they may do so out of ignorance.

At one time, so far back as the beginning of the present century, to many in Great Britain it appeared as a natural evil when half the children died under the age of twelve years, but on examination it was found to be one of their own creating. Were the deaths of infants a natural evil, other animals would be as liable to die as man; but this is by no means the case. It is this period of our lives the foundations of a good or bad constitution are generally laid; and Fijian mothers should be taught to know this through the medium of the *Na Mata*.

I do not think it is good for an infant, after it has fallen asleep from its mother's breast on the mat, to be enveloped by a sulu and left to inhale the unwholesome air tainted by its own exhalations. Few things prove more destructive to infants than confined air.

I do not think it is healthy for an infant, thus almost smothered and sweltering in perspiration, to be suddenly exposed to the colder air outside of its coverlet, an event which happens immediately upon the child awakening and struggling to imbibe free air. I do not think it is good for children to be carried on the backs of mothers and nurses with their heads swaying about, and their faces infested with flies; nor do I think it is good for infants to cry long and vehemently, straining their tender bodies, and frequently occasioning ruptures, inflammations of the throat, lungs, &c. All these evils—and many more have I observed when on labour-recruiting expeditions which brought me in contact with the everyday mode of existence of the Fijians; and I wondered then, as I do now, how it was possible under these unfavourable circumstances to perpetuate the race. It seems to me to be, indeed, a terrible struggle for existence.

The Spartan mothers exposed their offspring to perish in a glen of mount Taygetus if they appeared too weak to undergo the exercises to which the commonwealth destined all her subjects, but it is not in reality from any desire to propagate a vigorous race that the Fijian mothers subject their babes to as cruel an ordeal.

The gravest and most difficult question to answer is, the practicable remedies for the prevention of this infantile mortality. I have alluded to some, and would also suggest that inquests should be held on the bodies of all children as each death occurs. This may have a deterring effect on parents and make them more watchful and diligent in the nursing of their tender offspring. Intelligent natives could be appointed to conduct these inquiries, supervised and instructed by the Stipendiary Magistrates of the Colony, and not too large a circuit be allotted to each native coroner.

I have, &c.,
STUART BLACK.

No. 43.

The Reverend Frederick Langham, Chairman of the Wesleyan Mission in Fiji, Bau,
to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Bau, 29 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 30th December, in which by direction of His Excellency the Governor you invite an expression of my views in regard to the reported Decrease in the Native Population of this Colony.

In reply, I beg to say, that with the opinion of the Rev. L. Fison, M.A., as quoted in your letter, I agree generally. I believe that the Fijian race has been decreasing for very many years past, though I am not prepared to affirm that the decrease during the last decade is not greater than during the previous decade. The large mortality reported in our weekly church meetings for many years past has been the subject of remark and occasioned us no little concern.

The births recorded in a portion only of the Bau circuit during the last ten years, that is from 1882 to 1891, are 2,588; while the deaths during the same period numbered 3,153. And in only two of these years, namely, 1887 and 1888, were the births more than the deaths—337 and 440 births as against 327 and 427 deaths.

I should note here, that for a part of the year 1890, while I was absent from Fiji, my returns are not complete. I have them for only a few months of that year.

I doubt very much whether any person can definitely indicate the cause or causes of the decrease of the Fijian population.

I can only suggest some things which may account to some extent for the decrease, especially among the infant population. It does not appear to me that the condition of the women generally now is so favourable as in former times, and especially for some time after child-birth. They are not so well cared for, nor so well fed, and they are overworked. They have a large amount of work to do in connection with *Solevus* of various kinds, and with the various *Boses*, in preparing native cloth, fishing-nets, plaiting mats, and procuring other native goods, which are still *lavaki'd* in large quantities on these occasions, though not to the extent that was done some few years ago. The outdoor work of the women, too, is often added to by the absence of their men-folk—in some instances working, or trading, or begging in order to procure food and gifts for these same *solevus* and *boses*.

I believe, too, that women—not a few, and the number is increasing—are disinclined to bear more than one or two children; and the action taken to prevent child-bearing must be prejudicial to the physical

physical constitution of the women, and also of their children, when their ill-directed efforts are unsuccessful. The occasional abortions, and attempted abortions, and the still-born children, of which we hear, suggest a greater number than is generally supposed.

Then, the excessive use of *yagona*, and of such deleterious tobacco as the natives—men, women, and children—use must be extremely harmful, especially to young people, and to mothers suckling children. This is very generally admitted by the natives, and from long and careful observation I indorse this testimony. Upon their recommendation, a Regulation was passed restricting the use of the former. But this valuable Ordinance is not strictly enforced.

Another cause of decrease, I should imagine, is the existence of villages in most unhealthy localities. Notwithstanding the fact that many villages have been removed to healthier sites, others are still to be found in lowlying and damp positions, where there is no outlet whatever for the rain or for the refuse of the town, as for instance, Namara on the Tailevu coast, whose people have moved from a splendid hill site to a mud-hole, where the offal, &c., &c., sink into the swamp in which the town is built; or where the stench from the mangrove swamps added to by *all* the refuse of the town must be injurious, as at Namata.

With regard to the medical care and attention which is now within the reach of many of the natives, I am disposed to think it is not appreciated or availed of, except within very limited areas, in some of the provinces at all events, the natives generally having more faith in native medicines and in their untrained native doctors—so called—some of whom are undoubtedly very successful, and therefore, usually preferred. It is not to be expected that the natives will readily abandon native medicines and treatment, even for English medicines prescribed by trained medical practitioners; and I very much doubt whether chiefs employed as medical practitioners will be often availed of for a long time to come by the large proportion of commoners or even of chiefs. The commoner cannot readily approach the chief, and I doubt whether the chiefs generally will be prepared to sink the chieftain in the medical practitioner.

The injudicious use of clothing, too, is, I think, the cause of not a few of the chest affections of which the natives complain, and which carry off so many who are physically strong and have had generally good health.

The foregoing are, I think, responsible to some extent for the decrease in the native population, but they do not, I think, account for the mortality which has justly occasioned concern to the Government and to all who are interested in the permanence of the Fijian race.

I have, &c.,

FREDERICK LANGHAM.

No. 44.

Walter B. Hopkins, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Macuata and Bua, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Naduri, Macuata, 26 February, 1892.

No. $\frac{64}{1892}$.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular, No. $\frac{290}{1892}$, with reference to the Decrease of the Native Population.

As far as I can judge from my own personal observations during the past year and from what I have heard from the natives themselves, the decrease may be attributed to two or three immediate causes, viz. :—

1. Prevention of conception on the part of the women by drinking mixtures made from bark and herbs.—I am not sufficiently well acquainted with medical science to say whether this has the effect the natives attribute to it, but there is no doubt that the bulk of the women in this province do make use of these drinks for the purpose of preventing conception, or if already conceived, to bring on abortion.

2. Promiscuous sexual intercourse.—I am afraid that this is much more common than it appears to be from the Court returns, and but a very small proportion of the offenders are brought to justice. This not only has a bad effect in reducing the number of children, but leads to many quarrels between married natives, and in numerous cases to separation, and also to the use of mixtures as mentioned above.

3. Neglect of children by their parents, especially the mothers.—Well-looked-after and healthy children are the exception and not the rule among Fijians. Most of them are filthy, and covered with sores, which is certain evidence of the laziness and indifference of their mothers.

These appear to me to be the immediate causes of the decrease among the natives; but I am of opinion that they are mostly only the result of the native mode of life.

A gradual change in their system of living appears to me to be the only remedy for the falling-off of the population. If the natives were gradually emancipated from their communal customs, and had more personal liberty, they would probably take more interest in their home lives; a native hardly owns anything, and has only a very partial control over his own family. His wife is liable at any moment to be ordered to go fishing, or to clear the town, or such like work, and the children appear to be more under the orders of the chiefs than those of their parents.

As the natives became gradually more independent rivalry would spring up between individuals, and each man would take more care of his possessions, extending such care to his wife and children. The stagnation of their present mode of life and the lack of personal liberty, which engenders indifference

indifference, are, I think, the chief causes of the neglected and consequently unhealthy children and their early deaths.

The communal system which was necessary in the old days of war has outlived its usefulness, and is now a severe drag on the health and progress of the people.

I have, &c.,

WALTER B. HOPKINS.

No. 45.

William Gatward, Esq., Planter, Dingle Estate, Tailevu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Dingle Estate, Tailevu, 5 March, 1892.

I received from my wife on the 3rd instant, a Circular issued by Government *re* Decline of Native Race.

My opinion is that one-half of the deaths occur by the carelessness and indifference shown by their near and responsible relatives, by not going to Government doctors and getting advice and medicine, and by want of a change of diet in sickness. I have on numerous occasions told the natives, when I have heard of sickness, to go to Namena at once for the doctor's advice. The answer never varies, it is always *sa yawa* and *sa bese*.

The death-rate in this locality of late is very serious. I am aware of six deaths having taken place in the native town adjoining my property, Naloto, within the last two months, and no corresponding births or likely to be.

To remedy this evil, I would suggest an order in every town, that those responsible for the wellbeing and health of others, must within three days of known sickness apply to Government Native doctors for advice and medicine under penalty of 10s. In case of deaths, the scribe or officer who notes births and deaths, to inquire if such order has been complied with, if not, a fine of £1. These fines to be added to the funds of Native Taxes of the district in which collected, so that it could not be looked upon as despotic.

Also that in each Buli's house a certain amount of arrowroot should be kept and supplied to those who require it in sickness.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM GATWARD.

No. 46.

B. H. Thomson, Esq., Native Lands Commissioner and Acting Assistant Native Commissioner, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Provincial Department, Suva, 10 March, 1892.

In reply to your Circular, dated 30th December, inviting an expression of my opinion regarding the Decrease in the Native Population, I have the honour to append a few notes, which, while containing nothing original, may serve by corroboration to strengthen the views expressed by others whose opinions are entitled to greater respect than my own.

The actual decrease in the population during the ten years, from April, 1881, to April, 1891, is shown by the Vital Statistics to have been 4,598, instead of 8,948 as shown by the difference between the census taken at the beginning and end of the decade. For reasons, into which it is unnecessary to enter here, the Vital Statistics may be taken to give a more accurate estimate of the decrease in population than two census, taken on different, and in the former case, very primitive principles. Of these ten years, five, namely, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1887, and 1888 show an increase, so that the decrease is distributed between the years 1884, 1885, 1886, 1889, 1890, and the first quarter of 1891. But out of the total of 4,598, a decrease of no less than 3,172 took place during the fifteen months from September, 1883, to December, 1884. Next in order of decrease is the year 1886, with a loss of 973, and the first quarter of 1891, with a loss of 378. It was during these years that epidemics of dysentery, dengue fever, and whooping-cough were prevalent among the natives. The highest increase in population occurred during the years 1887 (445), and 1888 (559), and during those years the natives were free from epidemic diseases. It would, therefore, seem that whenever the Colony is free from epidemic diseases of European origin the native population does not decrease.

Natives when asked to account for the decrease in their numbers generally attribute it to the decay of their ancient customs in relation to women; and to estimate the value of their opinion it may be well to briefly compare the past with the present, making due allowance for the divergence of customs in different districts. A Fijian woman at the beginning of this century spent the years of her girlhood under the strictest surveillance. From the age of puberty to that of marriage she was under the care of the older women both night and day. When she was married, her wishes were not consulted, and her husband was usually the first man with whom she cohabited. Whether she became a member of a chief's harem or the sole wife of a commoner, she received from the midwives of the village the most careful attention during childbirth, however hard she had to work at other times. After the birth she was maintained for three months in a separate house, and the care of her child devolved upon the three or four women who were detailed to take charge of her. The child continued at the breast until it was two, or even three years old, and well able to assimilate solid food, and during the whole of that time the mother lived apart from her husband. At that time of intertribal wars, the very existence of the tribe depended upon the rearing of healthy children.

With

With the advent of Europeans, and the consequent abolition of polygamy and all that depended on it, the condition of the women changed. The repression formerly exerted upon the young girls was relaxed, and their new freedom soon degenerated into license. The young men, who in former times were rigorously kept apart, and instructed in war, planting, and seamanship, now devoted all their energies to devising sexual intrigues; and it is not too much to say that a Fijian girl who maintains her virtue after the age of fourteen is the exception. As practically complete license is allowed her, she shows a disinclination for the restraints of lawful marriage. Once married, she becomes at once her husband's slave, and she has no wish for children. She has not infrequently before marriage been the subject of an unskilled attempt to procure miscarriage, and her body is proportionately weakened. When her child is born, her female relations, if she have any, attend her; but within a fortnight of her confinement she again begins to be a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. The child is weaned at one year old, although the natives have still no better food to give the newly-weaned infant than they had when it was suckled for three years. To make solid food possible for it, the mother *chews* the yam or taro before putting it into the child's mouth. One need not enlarge on the deleterious effect of such a diet, especially as the mother is generally an inveterate smoker of strong tobacco. Though the Fijian mother probably never equals the lower animals in attachment to her young, she seems fond of her child while it is well; but as soon as it becomes sickly, and calls for any self-sacrifice, nursing it becomes tedious, and she adopts the pleasing view, that as the child is bound to die it is no good wasting energy in its behalf. When this happens, the child, not unnaturally fulfils its mother's predictions. I will quote in illustration the words of an intelligent native, a magistrate in Tailevu: "The deaths among the very young children have been many. It is because the mothers neglect them. I have noticed in many of the villages, that during the day the men go to their gardens, and the women to cut wood and draw water, leaving the sick children alone with no one to tend them. In one village there were six children. They cried all day for food, but their mothers did not return till evening, and then the children were too weak to suck and some died. The women are most to blame, and after them the chiefs of *matagalis* and the Buli, who do nothing to remedy this by compelling the women to tend their sick." Natural history tells us that it is dangerous to the lower animals to make artificial changes in their habits of life, and it is to be feared that the same law has operated to render disastrous the attempt to graft the European idea of the family on the Oriental and primitive man.

Since the year 1881, much has been done to improve the sanitary condition of the natives, and to disseminate among them a rudimentary knowledge of sanitary laws. But the Fijian is unfortunately so slow to adopt new ideas, that even when suffering from a disease of European origin, of the treatment of which he knows nothing, he will have recourse to the one family medicine or call in the nearest native with a reputation for skill in herbs, rather than go to the European Medical Officer who may be living within reach. Even if he puts himself in the hands of a doctor, he generally takes native medicine as well; and it may be safely said, that for the one out of every hundred patients who derive benefit from native medicine, ninety-nine have their chances of recovery lessened by it. To illustrate the aversion natives feel to European medicines, I may quote the words of the most influential chief in the Colony. "White man's medicines do not agree with us. It is because we eat different food. When we take it, we feel worse and loathe our food; but with native medicine it is different, for it suits Fijian food, and we can still eat. The white man's skill in surgery is useful to us, but his medicines to be taken internally only do us harm." His opinion was warmly indorsed by every native present.

That a number of young children suffering from whooping-cough and dysentery should be either quite neglected, or have their lives shortened by the so-called native medicines is bad enough; but the dangers to which every Fijian child is exposed during the almost inevitable attack of the mysterious native disease known as *coko*, though more insidious, are perhaps as fatal. At this critical phase of a child's life, chills are, I believe, especially dangerous, and against them absolutely no precaution is taken.

But there are unfortunately reasons stronger than mere disregard of sanitary laws for the fatal termination of so many cases of whooping-cough and dysentery. I have never found a native—and I have discussed the subject with many—who could be got to take more than a passing interest in the probable extinction of the race within a measurable distance. "Will it be during my lifetime?" is the first question that occurs to him, and, when satisfied on that point, he loses interest in the matter. Posterity being able to do nothing for him, he sees no reason for exertion on behalf of posterity.

But, while it is easy to build plausible theories upon the many obvious defects in the Fijian character, one is brought face to face with facts which un hinge every theory hitherto formed. In the little island of Yacata, with a population of 108, there has during the last decade been an average birth-rate of 27·1 per mille, and a death-rate of only 11·1 per mille. The island of Koro, one of the most fertile in the group, and the Yasawas, barren rocky islands in which for half the year the people are in want of food, also show an increase. All these islands, but especially Koro, have been liable to contributions by *lala* to their superior chiefs. Such discrepancies as these confound general theories, and serve to show that the causes, though aggravated by the apathy of the Fijian character, lie too deep to be disposed of by any attempt at generalisation.

It has been the custom all over the world, when the causes for some national defect are not apparent on the surface, to dispose of the matter by laying the blame upon the Government. Lawlessness in Ireland, a stationary population in France, have both been accounted for in this way; and even the present obscure question of the vital weakness of the native race has been thus used for purposes of political controversy. It has been stated, perhaps in some cases with genuine conviction, that the real cause of the decrease in the native population is the preservation of the communal system, under which the Fijians have lived since their appearance in the Pacific, and that if they were encouraged to break up their tribal ties their physical and moral nature would undergo an immediate metamorphosis. Happily it is not necessary to try such an experiment in Fiji in order to ascertain what the result would be. Less than five hundred miles distant is a group of islands where the natives lived in communities very similar to the Fijian, and where since the year 1862 the communal system has been abolished in favour of

of *quasi*-European institutions. The result of this experiment in Tonga is very curious. The islands, from their richness in cocoanuts, place comparative wealth within the reach of every native, and the early missionaries and travellers enlarge upon the prosperity and wellbeing of the country. Yet since 1862 the condition of the natives has been markedly retrogressive in almost every direction. The communal system, which formerly took the place of local rates, provided them with houses, sufficient food, and the power of combination for the public advantage. Now the people are, as a rule, miserably poor, and, being unable themselves to pay others to assist in building their houses, often live in hovels which a Fijian would be ashamed to call his own. Having shaken off the habits of obedience to the form of government into which their social instincts naturally crystallised, they have become impatient of any government, discontented, restless, and distrustful of one another. The men, being able to please themselves, choose not to work, and their families are therefore in actual want of food for some months every year. The result upon the vitality of the people is shown by the official figures of the census published in the *Petuu Aho* of the 26th June, 1891 :—

Total population	...	...	...	...	...	...	19,196
Adult males	...	...	...	...	...	5,281	
" females	...	...	...	...	...	5,142	
Children, males	...	...	...	...	...	2,910	
" females	...	...	...	...	...	2,940	
Children under 5 years, both sexes	...	...	...	...	...	2,923	
							19,196

There was a decrease in population from January, 1889, to March, 1891, of 530, or a decrease of 27·61 per mille in *two and a quarter* years, without counting Nuiatobutabu and Ena. The average annual birth-rate was 18 per mille, and the death-rate 28 per mille. These figures, which were not exceptional, do not tend to show that an abandonment of the communal system, and an individual tax in money, will do all that its advocates seem to expect from it.

To recapitulate : I believe that the causes for the terrible mortality among children lie too deep for cure by mere legislation, being due to the introduction of foreign diseases, the absence of the maternal instinct among the women, the apathy of the men, and the gradual abandonment of the social system most suited to the Fijian character ; and that the farther the race travels in the direction of civilisation (which in their case unfortunately means the *VICES* of civilisation), the greater will be its loss of vitality. A race may sicken like an individual, and a people that has lost its philo-progenitive instinct resembles a man suffering from consumption—much may be done to prolong life, but the end is certain, and beyond human cure, unless the very tissues of his body undergo entire renovation. We cannot by legislation reimplant in the Fijian mother's nature that most precious of all the human instincts, but we may do much to counteract the evils that its absence must entail.

The leading principle of the ancient native institutions was that every custom was enforced with a strong hand. I think that much can be done by well-considered legislation to check the downward tendency. We do not, because they are British subjects, shrink from compelling our children to avoid that which hurts them, nor should we hesitate to control the race of grown-up children to whom we have been placed *in loco parentis*, and who have shown themselves so incapable of taking care of their own interests.

But, in considering remedial measures, the mortality is not alone to be considered. Though the birth-rate has never yet fallen below 35 per mille, yet the statistics of the last three years show that it is declining: This downward tendency will be maintained year by year unless if the disinclination of the women for marriage, their readiness to desert their husbands on the slightest quarrel, and the ease with which under the existing Regulation the relations of either party may interfere to prevent a marriage, are not checked. Nor must it be forgotten that in twenty years, when the generation that has been so decimated in infancy is called upon to discharge its procreative functions, the birth-rate will be diminished by at least one-half. As much attention should, therefore, be paid to improving the birth-rate by amendment of the marriage laws as to controlling the death-rate by sanitary reform.

The remedial measures I venture to suggest are as follows :—

1. The Regulation regarding marriages should be amended so that not even parents should be able to prevent the marriage of persons over sixteen years of age. Provision might be made in it to prevent girls from being shut up in Roman Catholic seminaries and refused in marriage to a Protestant native. This practice is common in Bua and elsewhere.

2. The Regulation forbidding *duguci ni yalewa*, which was repealed in 1886 against the advice of many European and native officials, should be re-enacted. The giving and receiving of the *duguci*—in other words, the purchase-money—leads to the marriage of girls under compulsion, and the subsequent separation of the parties to the marriage.

3. Native officials should be instructed to encourage marriages.

4. A Regulation should be enacted providing a penalty for persons harbouring married women who have deserted their husbands. In the majority of these cases the woman has been enticed from her husband's home by her friends or relations.

5. Circulars in Fijian describing the symptoms and treatment of the commonest illnesses—such as *coko*, whooping-cough, and dysentery—printed on cardboard, and provided with a loop for hanging on the house-post, should be widely circulated. I have undoubted evidence that many lives were saved by the circular issued by the Chief Medical Officer for the influenza.

6. A Regulation should be enacted providing imprisonment for any woman found guilty of neglecting her child. Men who neglect their families should be liable to a like penalty. In Normandy, if not throughout France, mothers who sleep with their children, and so run the risk of overlaying them, are punished.

7. For a time at least an inquest should be held by the European or Native Magistrates into the cause of death of every child who dies under the age of five, and whenever neglect is shown the mother or other responsible person should be prosecuted. The mere fact of the publicity it would give to the death would have a beneficial effect.

8. Rewards of some kind might be given to women who have reared families of five or more.

9. In the provinces of Western Fiji the use of women in agricultural labour should be discouraged, and the Regulation relating to burdens carried by women be strictly enforced. I doubt whether there have been a dozen prosecutions under this Regulation since it was enacted.

10. The houses throughout the group should be rebuilt on the system adopted in Bua, and known as the "Bua House Scheme."

11. The penalty for fornication should be confined to the male offender only, and the sentence should be remitted upon the marriage of the parties. This has been found to answer well in Tonga.

12. *Solevus* at Provincial Councils should be forbidden, and large *magitis* discouraged. Being meetings for administrative purposes only, *solevus* are out of place, and the waste of food is often enormous. The Councils should never exceed two days, and the people should be made to disperse immediately the meeting is closed.

I have, &c.,

B. H. THOMSON.

No. 47.

R. L. Holmes, Esq., Planter, Bua, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Delanasau, Bua, 17 February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your printed Circular, dated 30th December, 1891. It reached me only yesterday, so I fear there is no chance of your receiving this, my reply, before the end of this month, as desired by His Excellency the Governor.

I have carefully studied the paper, which is all plain, only I regret that its statistical information is limited to 1887 and previous years, omitting the last four years.

As intimated by the Governor, the general question of native mortality *has* been often under my consideration, and I have formed many opinions as to the cause thereof; but I was not previously aware of the truly phenomenal rate of mortality among infants, as shown in paragraph (3), p. 4, viz.:—"The total death-rate for children up to ten years of age is 50·71 per centum." This lamentable fact almost excludes all of us settlers from gaining information who do not make a special object of visiting houses wherever sickness prevails; and then it would be of little use without at least some knowledge of medicine.

It must be borne in mind that the women hitherto have had almost no medicines worthy of the name, and the native doctors are, as a rule, far away—the nearest one to here, Wiliami, lives at Nabouwalu, quite 40 miles off—and the food they have to offer to sick children is of a very poor quality. In New Zealand, where I lived for nearly nine years, and where also the natives are rapidly disappearing, high authorities have traced much of the mortality among the Maoris to the fact of their wearing in recent years European clothing, which, when wet with rain, is not thrown off like the flax mats used to be, but allowed to dry on their persons, and hence the very prevalent chest-diseases and numerous deaths therefrom. In this hot country clothes worn by the children are of the lightest, but they may overheat themselves in the close mosquito-screens, and under blankets, and then run out in the rain.

It appears to me that very much light may be thrown on this subject by the appointment of a duly qualified medical man whose business for a time it would be to carefully examine each case of child-sickness within reach. Surely the cases are not so obscure but what a medical man could diagnose them, and a list so made up could not fail to have very important bearings on the vexed question at issue. The case, if obscure, could be fully tested by an autopsy or post-mortem examination. Also the treatment bestowed on the patient by its mother or nurse could be inquired into, and the fact explained whether the parents had any constitutional infirmity.

Passing from little children to adult natives, the difficulty still continues to an unprofessional settler. Many of the diseases that carry off men and women are to us utterly unintelligible. As regards the married or single women, you are of course aware that there is an immense amount of bad practices among them. In some of these villages there are old hags (I may call them) who practise as midwives, and are cunning in procuring abortion, when required to, by native medicines or otherwise. They also know certain herbs that, taken medicinally, not only attain that end, but render the woman barren and incapable of child-bearing all the rest of her life. Sometimes, when suspecting such cases as these where death supervened, I have longed for the presence of a medical man empowered to hold a post-mortem examination. A few of these old women sent on trial for manslaughter would check this iniquity.

As regards the sanitary condition of the villages, there is often much room for improvement. Stagnant cesspools are common in the wet season, and there appears to be no rules regulating the deposit of human excreta. Should diseases like typhoid fever at any time prevail, this neglect would lead to very fatal consequences.

I have never wavered in my opinion that the supervision of the natives is not sufficiently administered by the lax discipline at present in vogue. The acts or omissions of each chief being nominally checked by a higher authority till it reaches the apex in the Governor is admirable in theory and reads well, but in actual practice the system very often fails. If a Fijian is anything he is indolent and unwilling to step aside from the beaten track that never leads to progress; hence it has been apparent to me ever since Annexation that an Authority—an European officer—is imperatively demanded who would have magisterial powers, and who would hold rank next under the Roko, and have control over all the Bulis in his district. Such an official, if active and intelligent, should, and doubtless would, work wonders

wonders in keeping the Bulis up to the mark—very much needed!—in stimulating lost energy; in directing the growing of foreign plants of commercial value; in encouraging the *tankeis* to accumulate property, instead of, as at present, being the happy owner of a *sulu*, a mat, and a digging-stick, with a share in a hut and a cooking-pot; and generally in reducing chaos to order.

Of the general character of some, if not of most, of the Bulis, sufficient is known without my enlarging on it here, only to remark that the influence of those chiefs for good or evil is a factor of the very greatest importance. It is, in my opinion, the keystone of the arch. As matters stand at present it means stagnation or retrogression *versus* progress in material and moral welfare.

Beyond these few remarks I regret that at such a very short notice I have very little opinion to offer. The scientists of Europe are just now debating how is it that in France, that lays claim to be the foremost of civilised countries, depopulation has actually commenced, the deaths in 1890 exceeding the births by 81,572, (see Enclosure); so Fiji and other Pacific Groups may be said to be in good company.

A government can do much, but it cannot avert the decrees of Providence; and Sir Walter Buller, a leading colonist in New Zealand, said, after the decrease of the Maoris had been exhaustively discussed, "I fear we can do but little for them but use our best endeavours to smooth their dying pillow."

I have, &c.,

R. L. HOLMES.

P.S.—19 February.—Since writing the above, and while waiting for a chance to post it, I hunted up what literature I have bearing on the subject. The best I find is an article by Dr. Newman, printed in the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute," viz., "A Study of the Causes leading to the Extinction of the Maori," by Alfred K. Newman, M.B., M.R.C.P., read on the 22nd January, 1882. The subject is here exhaustively treated from a professional and general point of view; and the author makes frequent allusion to other countries, including Fiji and the Pacific Islands, where the natives are likewise disappearing. I would post the book at once were I sure that His Excellency the Governor would care to see it. The article is not long, only about twenty pages, but the book is a heavy one, and the postage-rates, by the way, on such are abnormally high in Fiji as compared with other places. Thus, the *Century* magazine, one of the largest, I get from Melbourne; the postage thence is one halfpenny; if I repost that magazine to any one in Fiji I have to pay 1s. ! Again, if I send a book to Suva, for instance, I have to pay twice the amount of postage that would be chargeable were I to address it to the Colonies or even to England. Truly a very curious anomaly!—R. L. H.

[Enclosure.]

M. Jules Simon has just published what he thinks will probably prove to be his last work. It is entitled *Woman in the Twentieth Century*, and he pleads in it the cause of the family, without which, he says, no nation can be either great or prosperous. He mentions one very startling fact, namely, that in the year 1890 the deaths exceeded the births in France by 81,572; so that the depopulation of the country has actually commenced. The number of marriages is annually decreasing, those in 1890 having been 3,602 less than those in 1889. On the other hand, the number of divorces is just as steadily increasing, having been at the rate of 1,657 in every 10,000 households in 1881, and 5,457 in every 10,000 households in 1890, so that rather more than one in every two marriages proves to be a mere temporary union.

No. 48.

George Aloys Peat, Esq., Planter, Tuvu Mila, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

MORE REASONS FOR MORE RATIONS.

And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.—

I. Timothy, v. 13.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE PRESENT UNTOWARD ATTITUDE OF THE FIJIANS AS TOUCHING THEIR CIVILISATION.

See! as we gaze an infant lifts its head,
Left by neglect and burrowed in that bed;
The mother-gossip has the love suppress'd
An infant's cry once wakened in her breast;
And daily prattles, as her round she takes,
With strong resentment, of the want she makes.
Whence all these woes?—From want of virtuous will,
Of honest shame, of time-improving skill,
From want of care t' employ the vacant hour,
And want of every kind but want of power,—

CRABBE.

'Tis fit that we should do our part
Becoming, that mankind should learn
That we are not to be surpass'd
In fatherly concern.

Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough :—
We'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff.—

WORDSWORTH.

In every department of learning there are a number of expressions so constantly used that they are received as axioms, pass muster without challenge, and become "stock phrases." "The blessings of civilisation" is one of these. It is one very easy to make use of, with the proper air of conviction in its entire and undoubted truth, but it is nevertheless one of the most difficult to estimate at its just value, to confine to its strict limits.

It

It seems to have been invented by political economists to express their appreciation of the very much greater advantage and pleasure enjoyed in his life by the civilised as compared with the savage man. Political economists being civilised persons, however, their estimate of the value of the said pleasures and advantages seems, if fairly considered, rather one-sided. Before coming to a conclusion that the differences in the two conditions of society are either in themselves, or are considered by those subjected to them, to be pleasant and advantageous, we should hear what the savage thinks about it.

Now, in descending the mountain of culture to reach our savage, we find long, long before we do reach him that many of these differences are *not* looked on as either the one or the other. That curious fact, the instinct of some comparatively civilised persons, presumably raised to a higher condition of life, still hankers after its lower levels, that some civilised and educated men, who with minds open to conviction have themselves lived in all the different stages of social development, far from announcing "*Ore rotundo*" the superior blessings of the so-called superior state, ask in a bewildered way, Whether on due consideration it has any at all? Whether civilisation does really and truly make life easier and more enjoyable?

This from them is decidedly surprising, but, what is perhaps still more so, we find the savage does not seem to look on all our boasted pleasures and advantages from our point of view at all—seems to consider the most of them as decided nuisances rather than otherwise; seems not only contented but even determined to do without nearly all of them when placed within his reach. When, therefore, we undertake to force them on his somewhat unwilling acceptance, presumably for his good, we must, if we wish to be successful, begin with those alterations only which can be proved to be really advantageous to humanity considered from every side; and, above all, we must educate his mind in such a way that he will value and enjoy the change. Failing this, I think it cannot be denied that we do him in every way more harm than good, that we destroy the little ease and pleasure with which he has hitherto been more or less contented, without being able to give him in return any at all of ours, thus making him more or less discontented—a manifestly worse state than that in which we found him.

It is almost impossible for a savage and a civilised man to fully understand each other. Therefore, when they come into contact, the most extraordinary mistakes as to each other's meaning are sure to take place; mistakes so utter that they would be ludicrous were they not pathetic; misconceptions fully as incomprehensible in their origin as exasperating in their effect. This state of affairs, these mistakes and misconceptions, are not by any means the fault of the savage only. Some of the most injurious are due to the fact that the civilised man himself has often utterly wrong notions as to what principles are involved in the differences he sees between the two conditions of society.

For instance, one of the most obvious of these is that, owing to his superior appliances and methods, a civilised man can produce more result by his actual exertion than a savage can; or, to put it concisely, he can do more with less work. The fact is patent, accepted, and appreciated as a distinct advantage by both. But the principle on which that advantage depends is not by any means so well recognised by either; so much so that the savage will find many, nay most, civilised men agree with him when he proceeds to reason that, since his work will now go further, therefore he will not be called on to work so much, and that this diminution of his actual personal exertion *is the advantage* he will gain by the change.

Now this is an entirely wrong and most mischievous idea. The civilised man does, and must do, not less, but more actual work than the savage; and, when the latter becomes fully civilised, he will find that he is obliged to exert himself much more in his latter than in his former state. The advantage does not, therefore, lie in the direction of less personal exertion at all, and a little consideration is needful to determine in what it does consist.

Every medical authority asserts, more or less distinctly, that all animal life is conditioned on exercise. Without it health of mind and body cannot exist. This exercise must be taken regularly, not by fits and starts, and must not be carried so far as to produce exhaustion or even very great fatigue. If these conditions are not adhered to pretty closely, injury will follow. From this it arises that all human beings are obliged to make a certain amount of daily personal exertion; not only to procure food, clothing, and shelter, the most obvious aims of labour, but to ensure the possession of a "sound mind in a healthy body." The exertion which they are obliged to make for the latter purpose solely I will call their "needful toil." It consists of two kinds, bodily and mental, of which the bodily seems, on the whole, the more important to the dual healthy existence. It is not a fixed quantity by any means, but varies not only as between individuals, but in the same individual at different times and under different circumstances. A steady combined performance of both its parts tends to develop both the bodily and mental powers of the worker, so that he can eventually do with advantage an amount every day of bodily and mental work that would at first have totally overpowered him. But when a man, whether civilised or savage, does not do his "needful toil," no matter how well fed, clothed, and housed he is, his health will suffer very materially; no matter what powers of mind he may once have possessed, they will leave him gradually.

Most savages in their purely natural state, though they neglect to a great degree their mental, do more than their bodily needful toil, forced that far by the exigencies of their position. So long as it is performed they are in robust health, have nearly always enough food, are moderately well clothed and housed. Their desires in these directions are satisfied by what they get by their labour, and the labour necessary to get what they want exceeds slightly their needful toil for their body. Thus they remain strong and healthy, if rather deficient in intellect. Their very moderate results are not, however, satisfactory to a civilised man, who, assisted by civilised methods and appliances, secures by his not so very much greater needful toil ten times better food, clothes, and shelter than the others could obtain by all the exertion of which they are capable, pushed to absolute exhaustion every day. This, it can be shown, besides being highly distasteful, would be fully as injurious as doing too little work.

We find that the savage, therefore, has to be content with what we consider the barest necessities of life, but that, having never known any other condition, he is pretty well satisfied with the result, but
that

that the average civilised man cannot live in either health or comfort in the way a savage does ; that what the one looks on as useless superfluities the other considers absolute necessities of his life, without which it must cease ; and the effect is that the desires of each call for the performance of rather more than their respective needful toil, thereby securing their respective health and wellbeing of mind and body.

The advantage gained by civilisation, therefore, is not that the necessity for exertion is in any way diminished, because it is increased, but that while the needful toil progresses arithmetically its result does so geometrically.

When, therefore, a savage is enabled to avail himself to any considerable extent of civilised methods and appliances, while he still remains contented with the results he could obtain without them, these methods and appliances are really injurious to him, because the facility they confer enables him to reach his lower standard of requirement without performing his proper needful toil. Before he can possibly enjoy to the full the advantages they offer he must aspire to the higher standard they enable him to reach.

A disregard of this fundamental principle, an assumption that savages must be benefited some way by civilisation, although they may not be materially raised above the primitive condition in which it finds them, is, and always has been, one of the chief reasons why endeavours to introduce it among them have hitherto almost invariably had disastrous effects ; have so frequently turned a fairly happy and healthy man—one industrious, too, in his own way—into a discontented sickly loafer, a curse to himself and to everybody connected with him ; have effectually taken the life out of him in every sense of the word. Add to this an inherent feebleness of constitution induced by a vicious method of breeding, as shown in one of my previous papers, and our wonder at the decrease among such savages will, I think, cease ; but a consideration of the principle here laid down will, I venture to think, direct our attention to palliative measures of considerable value.

As these remarks are applied more particularly to the Fijians, it will be well to leave the general question of the other Pacific races for the moment, and to consider the case of these the latest proteges of England ; the more so that, being under authority, and particularly amenable to it, more can be done for them than for any of their neighbours.

Many persons, otherwise well informed and apparently sensible, have not yet got rid of the “ noble savage ” delusion. They ask, with surprise, why civilise these people at all. They suppose the inhabitants of these and other Pacific islands to have lived at one time, if they do not do so now, in good health, peace, plenty, and security. What more would they have ?

“ O ! fortunati nimium, *sud ni bona novint agricolii !* ”

Did they but know their bliss, how more than blest, oh favoured swains !

is quoted with unction, as applicable to the case ; a policy of non-intervention is insisted on with vehemence. When we find so keen an observer as the American humourist, Mark Twain, with a most decided bias in this direction, we may be sure that in some circles at least, the feeling is a real one. But it is entirely wrong. Men who have passed a life time in the Pacific, and who are, therefore, much more capable of judging of the social condition of its inhabitants than any mere sojourner for a few weeks or months can possibly be, know, that here at least, the savage way of life is a very hard road to travel indeed ; that in a purely savage community, the instant fear of a violent death, rises up and lies down with a man ; that famine, from some cause or other, is never more than two steps from the door ; that sickness, aggravated by superstition, never quits the threshold ; that no effort of their own can materially better these poor wretches, who are so truly miserable, that the commonest humanity calls on us to help them in any way that may be possible. That we may not perhaps have taken the best way is true, and have consequently been more or less unsuccessful ; but that had we taken no way, we would have been criminal. While we must not let our hitherto qualified success induce us to relax our efforts, it should cause us to revise our methods ; always bearing in mind, that any departure from first principles should be subjected to the keenest scrutiny before being acted on.

It was in the beginning of the present century, that their duty to their neighbour in this respect began to be first realised and acted on in a practical way by Englishmen of all classes ; and contrary to the behaviour of these personages in the touching Gospel story, the Priest and the Levite, did not pass by on the other side. The Christian missionaries were the first, and up till now have been the most kindly Samaritans to these savage communities fallen among thieves.

It would be invidious to grudge them the credit they deserve for their really great success, it would be ridiculous to deny that they have done an incalculable amount of good, *sed surgit amari aliquid*. A sort of bitter twang mingles in their cup of fruition : their scholars have gradually become, if less ferocious, also less industrious ; if less aggressive, also less self-reliant ; if more learned, much more indolent ; with greater reason to be more, certainly less, contented ; while much better equipped for living happily, much less able to do so at all. I think the reason of this is not far to seek. The missionaries are nothing, if not Christian. They seem to consider the cultivation of a man's mind, and the improvement of his moral and religious feeling to be not only the sacred duty, but the distinguishing mark of a Christian, and, therefore, a laudable and supereminently beneficial proceeding ; while they regard the bestowal of the same care on his body, his health, his constitution, as the practice and indication of an agnostic, and, therefore, reprehensible and pernicious. Among the early Christians who had to make some essential difference between their teaching and that of their pagan compatriots, this doctrine culminated in asceticism of the most pronounced kind. The evil intreatment of the body became a recognised virtue, a bounden duty ; and a distinct echo of the precept lingers in the Christian churches of to-day.

The missionaries were only too willing to snatch a few hours, days, or even weeks from the bodily labour of their people to apply the time to their mental culture, never doubting for a moment that it was applied to much better purpose. To this end they supplied them with the tools of civilisation, taught them its methods, gave them its products, and thereby succeeded, with the best intentions in the world, in doing nearly as much harm to their lives as good to their manners. Because their pupils were enabled

enabled to shirk successfully their needful bodily toil, and became in consequence overwhelmed with a whole ocean of fresh troubles, brought on themselves all the ills endured for the very same reason by the most civilised classes of old world society,—the indolence, the self-indulgence, the *enuui*, the malaise, the *tœdium vitæ*, the lax morality, the ill-health, the poor constitution of the old Roman, and a great portion of the modern European aristocracy, without, however, their wealth, their comfort, or their courage.

Had the Fijian, while going to the mission school, not been given the mission hatchet; had he been kept strictly to his stone axe and his turtleshell shovel while learning his alphabet and scrawling his pot-hooks and haugers; had the labour he misapplied in making and perfecting weapons to kill his fellow countrymen been directed towards forming tools to “replenish the earth and subdue it;” had he, in a word, not been relieved from his bodily needful toil, we would find him to-day a more really civilised, a much better contented, a three-times happier, wealthier, and wiser man.

But some persons will say this course of action is extremely close to that which you condemn as non-intervention. Undoubtedly it is, but then it is put forward not as the best one that could have been taken, but only as one, which, inasmuch that it keeps closer to the fundamental principles on which the process of civilisation must be conducted, would have been better than that which was taken. Its outcome we all know has landed Fijian society of to-day in a very bad way indeed.

The people, once the hardest-working race in the Pacific, and surely, therefore, one of the most easily elevated, *now* do no really steady work at all, except when compelled thereto by the plauter or the prison. Here I pause to direct attention to the immense good they derive physically, and possibly morally, from both compulsions alike. The young men shuffle off on to the old ones the little needful labour grudged to their miserable *weres*, none half large enough for the requirements of the household, in order to loaf round the town, day and night, smoking *selukas*, drinking *kava*, and dangling after the women. The women, only too ready to imitate the bad example, spend all their time gadding about from house to house, idling and gossiping, to the utter neglect of their children and their household duties. Familiarity breeds contempt the old copy-book said; this unrestricted continual association of the sexes, formerly looked on as highly improper, leads to anything—everything—but marriage; and the direst want has come on the whole community in consequence of their slothful dawdling habits. This country requires no inspired prophet to take up a lament—no Ezekiel to wail, “Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters; the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas.” The entire extinction of the race is frightfully imminent, and will surely come to pass if something is not done to avert it.

That something I hold to be—give them more work, with an inducement and the power to do it; give it to both sexes alike, to keep them both out of mischief.

Here I am met with the expression of an opinion founded on the Vital Statistics of the country, and held by very high authority, that the women nowadays do too much laborious work already to be able to perform their duties of mother or nurse properly, and that, therefore, the young children die instead of live.

This statement requires the most careful consideration for, if correct, it shows at once that mine is not so, and it is supported by a chain of reasoning of such singular ability, that it seems presumptuous in me not to coincide with it, which I do not do, at least not entirely.

In the first place, it must be borne in mind that statistics, although composed of endless columns of figures, cannot be worked out with mathematical precision, cannot be made to give one, and one, only correct answer, all others being quite wrong. Experts say, that statistics may, in all honesty of purpose and procedure, be made to prove almost anything. That is, that many answers, all correct *so far as they go*, can be evolved from them; because you never know, when you are working out your question, whether you have got all its factors or not. Thus, while indispensable as the grounds of a theory by themselves, they contain no unassailable proof of its entire truth.

On page 32 of the Vital Statistics of Fiji for 1887, the provinces whose infantile death-rate is below the average, are classed as against those in which it is above it. This, if the evil of severe female work is a fatally injurious one, should also coincide with fact that, in the former the women work but little, and in the latter a great deal. But this, with every wish to do so, I do not find to be so evident as it ought to be. In fact, when I see Lau, where they do hardly any outdoor work at all, in juxtaposition with Rewa, where they do most of it, I fail to see the reason for the inference that hard work *alone* is the cause of the evil, especially when the classification adopted separates with hardly any other exception all the best from all the worst *fed* provinces.

Am I not then justified in thinking that the deficient food is quite as much at the bottom of it as the excessive labour; that the two disabilities either counteract or supplement each other; that the same favourable average infantile death-rate exists in Lau, where the woman does no work on an empty stomach as in Rewa where she works like a slave on a full one; while in Ra, where she works hard on little to eat, nearly half her children die? (See page 31, section 53, Average rate for 1887.)

A dispassionate consideration of the case of other well-known agricultural, vegetable-fed peasant women, will, I conceive, be here advantageous, for human nature is very much alike the whole world over, and the fundamental principles which cause or control its wellbeing are virtually the same for all colours.

Take then the case of the agricultural labourers of the Scottish Borders of fifty or sixty years ago. As a class, these hinds were not surpassed in Europe for their great size, their strength, their endurance, their every valuable quality of the body; nor were their minds by any means neglected, they were courageous, they were intelligent, they considered that ignorance was a disgrace to parents and children alike, they could read, write, and cast accounts, when the power to do so was unusual among even higher classes in other countries. Now, they were an exceedingly hardworking race, and the women worked fully as hard as the men. With the exception of swinging the flail and driving the team, the women did their full half-share of all the outdoor work of the farm, winter and summer, foul day and fair day; and, in addition

addition to thus doing an exceedingly honest man's day's work out of doors, indoors they had to bake, to brew, to cook, to serve the food and drink, to spin, to make, to mend, to wash the clothes and household linen of the family; all this without a hired servant. When the wife was utterly disabled by an expected or a recent maternity, if there was no single sister or grown-up daughter, able and willing to take the vacant place out of doors, then indeed a girl, called a bondager, was paid out of the scanty earnings of the family to do the woman's farm labour, due by the household to the laird, and to assist in the house at the supreme moment. Frugal to a fault, the family dispensed as soon as possible with her services, which lasted an incredibly short time, and the young mother resumed her field occupations, carrying her infant out with her as a rule, until one of her older daughters could be kept from the parish day-school to look after the young ones, or some superannuated granddame could be entertained inexpensively by the ingle for that purpose.

Were these people civilised? I do not think you could find a single person unwilling to admit that they were, and that highly. Were they happy? They were, and that profoundly. They did all their duty, and therefore enjoyed—yes, enjoyed—their life. After a day's work, which would make a half-a-dozen Fijians faint with exhaustion, a lad and his lass would, in fair lightness of heart, walk three or four miles to a dance, to remain there till very near the small hours. And the families were simply enormous. Fair want of elbow-room drove half the children abroad to make their fortune and leave their mark on the earth and her history, which they have done in a way most creditable in a people who are by no means numerous.

In making these remarks, I advance nothing that is not quite well known; and, when I say, further, that nearly everything is now changed for the worse, I do not think that I should be called a mere *laudator temporis acti*, because I make no doubt that as many pains had to be endured, and troubles suffered then as now. As Crabbe says in his poem "The Parish Register,"—

Is there a place, save one the poet sees,
A land of love, of liberty and ease,
Where labour wearies not, nor cares suppress
Th' eternal flow of rustic happiness;
* * * * *
Where young and old, intent on pleasure, throng,
And half man's life is holiday and song?
Vain search for scenes like these! no view appears,
By sighs unruffled or unstained with tears;
Since Vice the world subdued and waters drown'd,
Auburn and Eden can no more be found.

I only say that the borderers are not now possessed of either the size, the strength, or the endurance of their forefathers. This they admit themselves; and moreover they begin to suspect and to fear that "their head will no longer fill their father's bonnet"; that is, they have no longer the hard practical *wisdom* of the men of the previous generation or two. Their health is enfeebled, their women haggard, harassed, and distinctly overworked. The lad and his lass remain at home, too tired to leave "their ain fireside" for any jolification, however near. The families are much smaller; the actual days work more easy, though more burdensome; the race is evidently falling off wofully. They recognise and deplore the unwelcome fact.

What has caused the change? Too much work continued too long at too high a pressure? Not at all; for they now do much less than formerly. What then? They simply *changed their diet*.

"If I was a king, I wad be a costly king! I wad hae milk parritch and milk till't ilka day," a little lad of the last generation is popularly supposed to have made answer to the question as to how royalty would affect him. His notion of the money value of his fondly selected sole article of diet was foolish beyond expression, of course; but its chemical one can hardly be surpassed, for it is about the only food which contains in itself, and can furnish from day to day though unchanged, *all* the elements requisite to build up a strong skeleton, clothe it with muscles of iron and sinews of steel, form and nourish a healthy brain equal to the most severe requirements of science and of reason. The food of the people is very simple and inexpensive, was chemically eminently nutritious. It consisted of oatmeal and milk, rye, pease, beans, cabbage, beer, a few potatoes, and a little, a very little fresh meat. They were obliged to use these articles, and these only; for they were supplied as the greater part of the household's wages, and very little hard cash was given.

In an evil day for them all this was changed. The hinds claimed and received all, or nearly all their wage in money, with which they proceeded to buy nine-tenths of their food. They took to white wheat-flour bread from the baker, to tea and sugar, to more butcher's meat, to more potatoes, giving up their oatmeal, and to a great extent their milk; dropping most of their cabbage, and all their pease, beans, and rye, drinking whisky instead of beer; and it has ruined them mind and body in two or three generations, as any one familiar with their appearance at a hiring tryst forty years ago can see for himself to-day.

I think a distinct parallel can be traced between the two races of workers, the Scotch and the Fijian. Both were stronger and healthier some forty or fifty years ago than they are now, both had more vitality, both did more work more easily, both were more joyous and contented while doing it, both were much more nutritiously fed. The labour done jauntily by her great-grandmother would crush either woman of the present day to death.

Thus there is a good deal of truth in the before-mentioned opinion, that the Fijian mother works too hard, but it is not the whole truth. The work she does was once, and ought to be now, beneficial to her; it is the starvation allowance on which she has to do it, which turns what ought to be a blessing into a curse.

To merely recover the physical wellbeing of their savage state, to do again with the old joyous alacrity and the former decided advantage the work they once did, the Fijians must be twice as well fed as they are now. But granted that they would be much better off should they merely resume their former state, they cannot remain in it now. They have drunk of civilisation, they must either drain the cup to the bottom or die of thirst.

Therefore,

Therefore, as I said before, to be able to enjoy to the full a civilised man's advantages, they must do *his* work, they must increase their quota of needful toil to *his* standard, they must in short do three times their present labour; but to do this and thrive instead of perish in consequence, they must be at least three times as well fed.

How then are both these things to be done, for I hope that my reader will now agree with me that both must be done. It is not a simple question to answer, not an easy combination to make. To have any success, we must go back to first principles, we must note and repeat the first tottering footsteps towards civilisation taken by the human race. Now, the most formidable obstacle encountered by a man of the present day, who endeavours to realise to himself the proceedings and surroundings of archaic society, is the almost insurmountable difficulty he finds in limiting his view to things within the then horizon. A civilised man who has never tried to do this cannot form any idea how many things, now perfectly familiar, were then unknown. He can see no reason why men and women were paid divine honours for merely announcing truths now well known to the proverbial child unborn, he can see no inspiration in common everyday proceedings now so universally practised as a matter of course, that he detects himself taking it for granted there never was a time they were not so. Thus the first steps to civilisation, of such real difficulty and paramount importance to our remote ancestors, are now thought nothing at all of. For instance, the man who first made fire, first rose above the level of the other beasts; the woman who first put corn in the mill and made bread, first ceased to be a mere savage. Both steps conferred divinity on the persons who first took them, both now attract no attention whatever; but both retain their grave difficulty and their vital effect for any people who have *not* taken them. Therefore, of all the divinities of the old world mythology, Ceres is the one most worthy the reverence of the Pacific islanders, including the Fijians, who, up till now, ignorant of her gifts, have built her no altar, a fact in their economy of immense significance, and widely notorious, and yet it has not, so far as I know, ever been recorded as worthy of the slightest attention.

Bread is not their staff of life. All evidence, all analogy points to the fact it ought to be. Therefore, let the Government say with the imperative autocratic authority of a ship's captain at high noon—Make it so!

Theoretically if this was done, our question is answered and our combination made. There can be no doubt that many cereal crops grown and generally used for food in the tropics and their immediate vicinity could be grown here. There is a large variety of these crops never thought of by us, which nevertheless form the breadstuff of millions of people and their main food supply (Appendix B). The worst of them are more nutritious than anything cultivated in Fiji by the natives except, perhaps, *dalo*, with the analysis of which I am unacquainted. Thus the first half of our requirement is met, viz.:—Food of better quality and increased quantity. (See Appendix A). Again, much more labour and intelligence are requisite to sow, tend, harvest, house, and afterwards grind and cook a crop of corn before it can be consumed as food, than to plant, dig, and prepare one of roots or fruits; and the second object is gained, viz., more labour for mind and body.

I say, theoretically nothing could be better, practically the plan presents great difficulties. Still it seems on the whole so advantageous; it seems to follow the history of every advancing nation the wide world over so closely; it has been already the starting-point of so many civilisations, that I really think the most strenuous exertions, the utmost stretch of authority, would be well made and exercised in a vigorous and determined effort to bring it about.

I am prepared to be told here that cereals cannot be grown without the plough. I submit that this is not the case. The invention of the plough drawn by cattle is the next step upwards. The ploughman, a very ordinary character in our day, was in his day the first civilised man. Corn was grown by hand labour at first, as a portion only of the food of the family. Its transcendent value as such caused easier methods of culture to be sought after and used, in order to make it the staple support. To-day large farms in Belgium are under the spade with astonishing results. Even in this country, I am told by good managers, a coolie, with a long-handled shovel, holds his own pretty fairly against a team of horses with a plough. There is no reason to suppose a Fijian could not do the same.

He must, however, have some inducement to work. To this end the crop or crops selected must furnish a food which he would relish. Maize, for instance, he has a prejudice against; but he does not dislike rice cooked as the coolies use it, and he is exceedingly partial to it when ground. He must also be certain that he will enjoy the whole fruit of his labour.

The most effectual way to do this, is, of course, to give him a piece of land of his own, as explained in one of my previous papers; but, without going that length, the new food might be called "Royal or Queen's fare," and protected by a *tabu* for the grower in its every stage, exempt from *lala*, forced contribution, and *kerekere*, &c., under severe penalties; consumed solely by his household, and on no account given to any one outside each family circle.

A certain portion of the land belonging to each town should be marked out as its cornfield, varying, of course, in size, according to the population, after the style of the infield of the old village community. In this infield, each householder's lines could be eventually laid off, and his responsibility to properly cultivate them insisted on. These lines to be assigned by lot, whenever it proved necessary to break up fresh ground to fallow old. The infield, as soon as selected, to be surrounded by a substantial well-preserved live fence, so as to make it eventually a secure paddock to run the working-cattle, which must come sooner or later, both as assistance to the labourers and as providing manure. No other crop to be grown in the cornfield on any pretence.

Of course, the people must be taught to do all this, and they can only be taught gradually, and with a good deal of difficulty, because they are very conservative and averse to change. But when we find that the mission, with no actual authority over them, abolished polygamy—a practice one would believe rooted in their very inmost heart—abolished it completely in two generations, surely the Government need not doubt that they can be made to grow better food in a few years.

A beginning might be made with a few selected Rokos and Bulis, who have the good of their people at heart and are intelligent and enterprising. I feel sure that such exist, and are well known to the Government. To them, a really respectable agricultural coolie sirdar and his wife should be sent to inaugurate the experiment. This man's duty would be to superintend the clearing and preparation of the ground, the sowing, tending, protecting from birds, harvesting, housing, and storing of the crop in the Indian fashion; using for that purpose the labour of the young men of the town under the authority of the Roko or Buli, as the case might be, and the supervision of the Stipendiary Magistrate. His wife would direct the grinding, and above all, the proper preparation of the bread or porridge—insisting on its being well and thoroughly done; this would fall to the share of the young women.

The quern or old stone hand-mill, perfectly familiar in, and procurable from India, would, I think, be at first, at all events, the most suitable one to provide; for it is inexpensive, impossible to break, simple to use and keep in order, and fairly effective. A public mill should be set up in each town cultivating a corn crop, sheltered in a suitable house.

The different households should be told off, so as to succeed to the use of it after fixed intervals in rotation; no one to be allowed to grind out of their time or turn. Whenever there was not time enough for all to grind a very considerable portion of their daily rations at one mill, then another would be erected.

After a crop or two had been grown and used successfully (I anticipate that in this country more than one could be raised each year—Appendix B), the various districts could be instructed by Fijian experts until, eventually, every household performed its private duty in this matter with the aid of its own members only—which is, of course, the end aimed at.

The most important part of the plan seems to me to be the selection of a food which the people would like from the first, and to obtain which they would be willing to work. No real good would arise from a mere exercise of authority to enforce the production of one they would not care to eat.

If at the next *Veibose Vakaturaga* the enormous vital importance of the question was impressed on the chiefs, and, if possible, samples of the various Indian food crops imported, especially in whole grain, from India for the purpose, were ground and prepared by coolie experts in their presence, possibly one or more might so strike their fancy, that their every exertion would be gladly made to introduce and enjoy it here.

Here I conclude, not because there is no more to say in connection with the subject, but because the full discussion of an operation so important is far beyond my powers—far beyond the space at my disposal in a paper like the present. The consideration of each detail, the selection of the best method of dealing with each feature of the case as it arises, would fill a volume, and not cease till the end in view was attained. I have merely endeavoured to give a rough outline of the “lay of the land,” so to call it; therefore, I will quote here the instructions for making a military sketch given by Lieut.-Col. Drayson, R.A., in a little work intended for the cadets of the Royal Military Academy, and included as an auxiliary text-book by the Military Education Division.

“War Office 1872.” He says among other remarks:—“When the sketcher has unlimited time at his disposal he should notice everything on his sketch, but, as this rarely happens on service, each individual should remember to what objects his attention should be directed, so that he may avoid noticing paltry details, whilst matters which might influence a battle are overlooked. Thus some thought and skill is required to transfer upon paper just those military features which a General about to move troops in a country would require to know.”

Peace also hath her battle-fields. If this rough unprofessional survey of the chief features surrounding a not impossible and apparently unnoticed line of attack contributes even in a small degree to another of her victories, then the pains and consideration given to it by the maker will be more than well rewarded.

APPENDIX A.

By the expression “a nutritious food” is meant, not a substance which merely contains many of the elements used to form or feed the body, but one in which all the elements it does contain are available for that purpose.

There is no question in Hygiene so difficult, and even to this day obscure, as Alimentation (Diet). The difficulty depends on the great influence of personal diathesis and idiosyncrasy. Science, while acknowledging that it is quite true, can even now give no satisfactory reason for the popular expression that what is one man's meat is another man's poison. Therefore it is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules which will always be correct in all cases; and, as the subject is exceedingly complex, an attempt to tabulate all the minute variations would lead to confusion worse confounded, and would probably be challenged as incorrect in most of its details by one or other of the Schools of Medicine. The views of the author given below are simply given on his own experience, obtained in many instances by the practical method of eating the pudding that required the proof.

Food consists of the two great classes of chemical science—Inorganic and Organic.

The inorganic are certain salts and minerals, as common salt, sulphur, phosphorous, iron, lime, &c. These are contained, in greater or less amount, in all the substances of the organic class, and are not often exhibited in the separate state.

The organic is divided into two principal groups, the Azotized and the Non-Azotized. The first containing nitrogen, and the latter being without it. The azotized elements produce blood and flesh; the non-azotized, fat and heat; or, rather, the first are those elements which, as they form the body, I will call elementary; the latter, those which feed and sustain it, and therefore alimentary.

In the table given below, which will, I believe, be found fairly accurate in a rough way, these two groups are seen to be combined in different proportions in the various foods; that proportion varying from the ratio of 1 to 1 to that of 1 to 10.

The nutritious value of a diet, that is all the food taken, depends on the fact that the ratio *proper to the wants of the consumer* be preserved; for, as the whole body is constantly renewed, that part of it most wasted must be most fed. Thus, persons working hard require a higher ratio of the elementary group to the other, because their flesh, that is their muscles, are expended rapidly, while a sedentary occupation calls for more alimentary constituents, because the muscles do not want renewing so often, while the subject requires sustaining all the time.

The proper proportion for an average diet for a healthy man doing somewhat more than his “needful toil,” seems to be 1 to 3.9 or 1 to 4.1.

If an article of diet is deficient in one group, it must be supplemented by one rich in that group. If this cannot be done, it must be remembered that the subject will only assimilate, that is use, that portion of the food taken in which the ratio is that proper to his wants, and that all the overplus of either group will be either lost entirely or prove injurious.

Thus, a hardworking person fed on rice alone, theoretically would lose the greater portion of its nutrition, because, the ratio being 1 to 12, he must fail to assimilate three-fourths of the alimentary substances it contains. This is notoriously the case with persons not used to it. Idiosyncrasy steps in and corrects to a great degree this evil with those who are; but a comparison between two races brings out this more clearly.

The Chinaman and the coolie, is a small, neat-made man, soft, as a rule, and inclined to run into fat on the least provocation; the diet is rice, ratio 1 to 12; that is very good for feeding the body, but bad for making it. The Scotch borderer cited in the text—a grim, gaunt giant, without an ounce of fat on his bones, hard as nails—he lives on oatmeal, ratio 1 to 3·77; he makes a frame he can't feed.

All food contains water, which, like the water of crystallisation, is an integral portion of its substance, and consequently increases its bulk without adding anything to its value. This is important. Turning to potatoes, we find the ratio is 1 to 10, that is, they are deficient in the elementary group. If they constitute the whole diet, a very large mass must be consumed before the needful quantity of that group has been supplied. This necessitates the waste, or worse, of a large amount of the alimentary one.

The Irish peasantry work hard on potatoes, but they add buttermilk, which brings the ratio within a reasonable distance of the standard.

Now, yams are probably not very different from potatoes. The Fijian lives, and is expected to work, on them. I say that, theoretically, it is impossible. He has to eat three times the quantity of food really requisite, at any rate, to make up the deficient elementary group; and as, besides this, there is 75 per cent. of the mass mere water, he simply can't hold it, and is, therefore, starving—that is, he is not supplied with sufficient nutriment of the proper kind, though over-burdened with what he does not want. Indian millet presents about the same ratio, 1 to 9·07, but, as it only contains 12 per cent. of water, he could easily carry the bulk he has to swallow.

The writer found by experience that a mixture of rice and beans, or maize and scraped cocoanut, was better for Line labour than a mixture of rice and cocoanut or maize and beans. He submits, subject to correction, his idea of the reason:—

Rice.....	7	83	Maize.....	12	80	Rice	7	83	Maize.....	12	80
Beans	26	46	Cocoanut ...	15·5	31·5	Cocoanut ...	15·5	31·5	Beans.....	26	46
33 129			27·5 111·5			22·5 114·5			38 126		
Ratio 1 to 3·9.			Ratio 1 to 4·4.			Ratio 1 to 5·1.			Ratio 1 to 3·3.		

Here it will be seen that those diets which suited best practically, were precisely the ones in which the ratio approached nearest to the theoretical standard. When we take into consideration the fact that flesh-meat is a very highly azotized substance, the rationale of the addition by the Government of a reasonable quantity to the ration of yams is seen to be sound, since it corrects the ratio in the right direction, while the exhibition of too great a quantity causes disease of the blood in consequence of turning it the wrong way.

	Water.	Azotized.	Non-Azotized.	Ratio.		Water.	Azotized.	Non-Azotized.	Ratio.
Wheat.....	15	15	60	1 to 4	Potatoes	75	2	20	1 to 10
Barley.....	15	12	66	1 „ 5·8	Turnips	88	1·5	15	1 „ 10
Oats.....	16	15	70	1 „ 4·7	Beetroot.....	85	2	12	1 „ 6
Maize	14	12	80	1 „ 6·6	Cocoanut	53	15·5	31·5	1 „ 2
Rice.....	13	7	83	1 „ 12	Wheat flour, bolted	10·33	9·70	78·77	1 „ 8·3
Beans	14	26	46	1 „ 1·8	Wheat flour, un-				
Pease	14	24	55	1 „ 2·3	bolted	15	29	90·77	1 „ 3·12
Indian Millet.....	11·95	8·64	78·39	1 „ 9·7	Oatmeal	14	18	68	1 „ 3·77
Comboo	11·80	10·13	76·38	1 „ 7·5	Ryemeal.....	14·5	9	76·50	1 „ 8·5

The special value of unbolted wheat flour, which is well known, depends on the phosphorous it contains.

APPENDIX B.

MINUTE ON THE SMALL-SEEDED FOOD GRAINS CALLED MILLETS.

THE following particulars are extracted from various works, none of which date later than 1877. The information contained is, therefore, in these days of rapid advance, already somewhat obsolete; still it may be relied on as correct in a general way:—

The word millet has a widely-extended signification, and embraces the edible seeds of various grasses, very dissimilar in habit and appearance.

Dr. Forbes Watson, in his treatise “On the Composition and Relative Value of the Food Grains of India,” states that the millets in India form the staple food of a larger number of the population than perhaps all the other cereals put together.

Botanically, they consist of three genera, or, rather, of only two, for the *Andropogons* and *Sorghums* are very closely allied, the other being the *Panicums*. The species are numerous, and very imperfectly understood (at that date).

In the Madras Presidency there were grown in 1870:—

	Acres.
Cholum (<i>Sorghum vulgare</i>)	4,855,000
Raggee (<i>Eleusine corocana</i>)	1,611,000
Veragu (<i>Panicum milliaceum</i>)	1,605,000
Cumboo (<i>Pencillaria spicata</i>)	3,197,000
Corralu (<i>Panicum italicum</i>)	1,018,000
Millets (various)	614,000
12,900,000	

Indian Millet or Guinea Corn (*Andropogon sorghum*, Brotero; *Sorghum vulgare*, Pessoon; *Holcus sorghum*, Lin).—Is very prolific. It is the yellow Cholum or Jowaree of some districts in India, best suited for countries where the temperature never falls below 60° Fahrt. Forms the staple food of the Madras Presidency, with rice and comboo; that of the Bombay Presidency, with wheat; of the North-West Provinces, Oudh, the Punjab, and Central Provinces. It is universally cultivated, and is in many places the staple food of man and beast; will grow on any soil, but prefers the black. It matures in ninety days. Several varieties.

Red Cholum (*Sorghum cernuum*, Wild; *Andropogon cernuus*, Roxb.).—Grain white; forms the staff of life of the mountaineers beyond Bengal.

Sorghum

Sorghum or Dhurra (*Sorghum scoparium*, Lin.; *Sorghum vulgare*, Lin.).—The principal food of the Egyptian fellahs. Sown in April, in good deep soil, when not irrigated; in June when water can be had. Is remarkable for its resistance to drought and for power of vegetation; has a high food value for man and beast.

Italian Millet (*Panicum italicum*, *Setaria italica*).—Delights in a light, elevated, tolerably dry soil. Much prized by native Indians, who make cakes and porridge of it. For the purposes of pastry, little inferior to wheat. Brahmans hold it in high esteem. First crop sown in June or July, harvested in September; second crop, from same ground, between September and end of January; matures in about ninety days. Three varieties.

Saiva Millet (*Panicum grumentaceum*, Roxb.).—Two crops; soil light and dryish; wholesome and nourishing, easy of digestion; yields fiftyfold; resembles rice, but is more palatable to children.

Cumboo or Spiked Millet (*Pennisetum spicatum*, Swartz; *Pennisetum typhoideum*, Rich.; *Holcus spicatus*, Lin.).—Terminal spike erect, as thick as a man's thumb, from 6 to 9 inches long; seed obovate, pearl coloured, smooth, with hilum. Called in some localities Bajree. Forms, with milk, a chief article of diet; matures in about ninety days in India; planted in June or July, ripens in September.

Raggee (*Eleusine corocana*).—Highly important to the poor of India from its hardness and abundant return; will grow on almost any soil. Seeds are ground into flour by the handmill. It is chiefly a bread grain; chief food among the labouring classes in Mysore; is usually stored in pits, and will keep good in them for many years. Two varieties.

Seff (*Poa Abyssinica*, Jacq.; *Eragrostis Abyssinica*, Link.).—Several varieties; abundant yield; the bread corn of the Soudan and Abyssinia.

There are besides, of not much value, *Sorghum saccharatum*, grown in Australia as sweet fodder principally, but yielding also a good grain; Broom Corn—in Australia, America, and New Zealand, for brooms—yields a valuable grain; Chena or Indian Millet (*Panicum miliaceum*, Lin.), a poor crop in India; Shanay (*Panicum miliare*, Lam.), sometimes grown in India and China; Koda Millet (*Paspalum scorbulatum*), grown to some extent in India, but unprofitable, and only had recourse to on bad soil.

I believe there are many more of which I have no information, such as Kaffir Imphee, Dhall, &c.

GEORGE ALOYS PEAT.

No. 49.

The Reverend Arthur J. Small, Wesleyan Missionary, Viwa, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Mission House, Viwa, 11 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of His Excellency the Governor's communication on the question of Native Mortality, and of forwarding the following brief reply thereto, with humble apologies for so far exceeding the time at which it was stated in the Circular the replies were desired to be in hand.

Before proceeding to give expression to the few observations I have to make, I may be permitted to say how glad I feel that His Excellency is taking so deep an interest in this very important question of native mortality, and to thank him very heartily for his lengthy, interesting, and valuable circular. The circulation of that document cannot fail of being helpful to him in the searching investigation he is making into the causes of the all too-evident decadence of the race of people who are the natives of this group of islands; while at the same time those who desire to assist in the attempted solution of the problem in question cannot but feel gratified at His Excellency's courtesy and consideration in thus inviting their assistance and co-operation.

With His Excellency's observation that "it would almost appear, therefore, that the cause of this decadence of race is attributable, less to the form of their governments respectively or to the differing conditions springing therefrom, than to evils existing in the social and domestic life of the people," I am in general agreement. From my knowledge of the Fijians, now extending over a period of nearly thirteen years, I am convinced that while the "conditions springing" from the form of government in vogue here (one being the increased power which the chiefs exercise and invariably abuse to the great injury of their people), cannot be exempted from the list of causes to which the diminution of the race is referable; yet, in comparison with those "evils existing in the social and domestic life of the people," the practising of which is fatal to the upgrowth of the nation, they constitute a factor of insignificant proportions. And since it is certain, from the testimony of the natives themselves, that many of those evils were, with others that have been abolished, in operation before ever white men settled here, it seems to me only fair to conclude that a decrease in the population would have been apparent to-day even if the natives had never seen a European. Whether the decrease would have been as great to-day as it is had the natives never come in contact with the white race is a question that will receive different answers from different persons. For my own part, I think it is probable the decrease would have been considerably less. One reason for holding this opinion is, the group would have been free from those foreign diseases which have proved and are still proving so destructive.

Some of the Causes of the Abnormal Mortality.

Respecting the causes of the lamented mortality, it is certainly beyond my power to name any that are not already fully known to His Excellency; nevertheless, I would respectfully invite attention to the following:—

1. Mistreatment by *vuniwai* and *yalewa vuku*.—While it is undeniable that much good is done by the native doctors, it is also true that many lives are annually lost through medicines ignorantly administered and surgical operations unskilfully performed by them. Unfortunately I have never kept a record of the numerous instances of this character that have come under my notice, or I would give a few as illustrations.

2. Living on unhealthy sites.—No doubt the natives suffer less from living on swampy sites than Europeans, but it is manifestly impossible for them even to reside in malarial districts without paying heavy penalties to Nature for such culpable transgression of her laws.

3. Immoderate tobacco smoking.—It is my firm conviction that many Fijian children are born in a sickly condition, and soon die, through the immoderate use of tobacco by their parents, especially by their mothers.

4. Excessive *yagona*-drinking.—It is a fact well known to His Excellency that in former days the use of *yagona* among the Fijians was restricted to the middle-aged and the elders. With the introduction of civilisation that wise restriction ceased to be enforced. Nowadays any one may drink who pleases, and as much as he pleases. Around the *yagona* bowl are now found the old and young, often of both sexes, drinking together; drunkenness and debauchery too frequently characterising the closing scene of the midnight carousal. The effect of this excessive drinking on the general health is undoubtedly injurious, and family life shares heavily in the injury so inflicted.

5. The introduction of foreign disease.—Comment on this head is scarcely needed, since Europeans and natives agree that the new diseases brought into the country are a very fruitful cause of mortality.

6. Decadence of physical stamina.—Judging from what is known of the history of the Fijians, and not overlooking native tradition, it does appear as if the race, as a race, was formerly much superior physically to what it now is. Physiologists show that a race sometimes falls into a decline much after the same manner as an individual does. I sometimes fear that the Fijian race has already entered upon a decline, and that all our efforts to arrest that decline must prove futile.

7. Absence of suitable food in time of sickness.—The excellent Regulations made at one of the annual *Boses* bearing on this important matter are, it is well known, never carried out. Unless the sick are near Europeans they stand a poor chance indeed of obtaining nourishing diet. I feel certain that a number of the sick die through want of suitable food quite as much as through anything else.

Some of the Causes of the Low Birth-rate.

1. The employment of means to prevent conception.—The practice of employing means to prevent conception, is, it is feared, more generally resorted to than was thought to be the case. A number of instances has come under my notice from time to time.

2. The employment of means to procure abortion.—This practice also is certainly not uncommon, judging from the number of cases that become known. A very gross illustration came to light in this neighbourhood only a few days ago. On these two matters the public conscience needs educating.

3. Difficulty of effecting marriage.—In looking around my district, I have been struck by the large number of single men and women who ought to have families about them by this time. Young men complain, and often justly, of the difficulty they experience in their endeavours to effect marriage. Girls are frequently dealt with by their parents and friends as chattels to be disposed of to those who bid highest. There is great abuse of the power a *matagali* exercises over the marriageable female members of it, and much suffering and sin are the natural outcome of such abuse.

What remedies are practicable in view of the present emergency, I leave wiser heads to decide, but I cannot help expressing a hope that something will be done in the way of lessening the difficulties referred to. If that could be done, an improvement in the statistics of the Colony might reasonably be expected.

I have, &c.,
ARTHUR J. SMALL.

No. 50.

John Raymond Farewell, Esq., Superintendent of Police, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva, 16 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular inviting an expression of opinion relative to the Decrease of the Native Fijian Population.

On perusal of the circular, and from the figures given, it is apparent that the decrease in the main is unquestionably due to the heavy mortality amongst young children, hence it is necessary to ascertain what may be the predisposing cause of this mortality at the present day.

It may also be accepted as a fact that throughout the Pacific the aborigines have, since their discovery by the early navigators, been steadily on the decline.

To my mind, the cause of this may very reasonably be attributed to intermarriage (evidenced in Fiji by such diseases as *kana e loma*, *vidikoso*, and *eoko*), and a consequent degradation of stamina and vitality; as time goes on this cause becomes more powerful in its effect, and induces other causes which aggravate the main cause, so that the extinction of the race appears to be inevitable. Though a deplorable conclusion, it must be considered how these causes may, so far as it is within our power, be eradicated.

The cause general then having been arrived at, it remains for me to give what, in my opinion, are the main aggravating causes, which, if checked, would in a large degree lessen the rapid decrease of the race, and improve its social condition.

Primarily then the causes are these:—(1) The insanitary condition of the native villages; the growing habit of the men forcing upon the women the whole work of planting and providing for the community; the utter disregard shown by the men for the condition of their women in all the stages of pregnancy and child-birth, the women, with reason, have no desire to bear children and rear families, the whole work of which is devolved upon themselves; the too free use of tobacco and growing habit of *yagona*-drinking by women, this latter cause creating a want of moral and physical stamina; (2) Epidemics—such as influenza and whooping-cough.

In regard to cause number one.—In former days, before the advent of civilisation, for safety and strategical purposes native villages were invariably built on hills and eminences naturally drained and dry, with good water supply; the people's vitality was stronger, and they had more energy; their houses were kept in good repair, and their sanitary condition was vastly superior to what it is now. Villages
now

now are mostly on flats close to streams, are damp, and subject to inundation; the houses are in bad repair, and without proper raised foundations; no attempt is made at drainage, the water remaining stagnant, and in pools, which, on evaporation, causes noisome and poisonous vapours to rise; the weeds grow rank; the villages invariably swarm with pigs and dogs, which bring flies to carry infection. It is also very often the case that the water supply is bad; and though good may be close by, that which is nearer and more handy is used, because through ignorance and laziness they will not go further to get good water.

Formerly, too, on the principle that unity is strength, their villages were not so scattered as nowadays.

Speaking of Macuata, where the mortality is higher than that of most provinces, I have noticed that villages are most scattered; three or four huts in bad repair situated in a most out-of-the-way spot are styled a village, and sometimes there is one "Turaga ni koro" for three or four of these so-called villages, which are invariably some considerable distance apart. Here comes in the difficulty of inspection and enforcement of the Regulations respecting food, health, and sanitation.

The Fijian's idea of a good wife is, to use the exact words of a Fijian to me, *a yalewa dau tei, dau goli, dau cakacaka*: literally translated, "a woman who always plants, always fishes, and always works." He looks to her to procure all the necessities of life.

As the weaker vessel, and always having been regarded from ancient tradition and practice as a mere chattel and slave, she, from ingrained usage, submits to a life of hardship, hard work, constant exposure fishing on the reefs at night, carrying heavy burdens of food, firewood, &c., and this invariably during the course of her pregnancy, and subsequent birth of and attempt to rear a child. The child is born weak and sickly—the mother weak and overworked herself, cannot afford its proper nutriment—the result is death to the child and a relief to the mother.

As evidence of want of stamina and moral courage, it is well known by those who have any knowledge of the race, how soon they become depressed and seem to lose all hope and desire to live. So soon as any sickness overtakes them, they make up their minds they are doomed; those attending them and those around them say they will die, and thus they neglect themselves and are neglected. It is with difficulty they can be brought to submit to any course of medical treatment; and they treat European medicine with suspicion.

Having lived for some time with a Government Medical Officer, I had opportunity to see how hopeless a task it was to deal with a sick Fijian. He will accept neither medicine nor advice; makes up his mind that he must die—and does die. This same characteristic applies to the mothers in respect to their children, and, though not wanting in a certain amount of natural affection, when their children sicken their want of moral resolution and strength, coupled with the physical obstacles already stated, gives the result that they simply allow their children to die.

Respecting over indulgence in *yagona* by women. In former days only the old women and not many of those were allowed to drink *yagona* (I am giving this on Fijian authority), now there are few women who do not drink when they have opportunity; added to this, smoking in excess must be very debilitating to their vigour.

With respect to cause number two, I think the Fijian disease *coko* contributes very largely to the mortality amongst children. What may be the origin and remedy for this disease is more a matter for report by medical men. Could it not be the outcome of intermarriage? It is a curious fiction among Fijians, that unless a child has *coko* it will always be weakly, if, indeed, it ever reaches maturity. From my own observation of the effects of this disease, and the condition to which healthy and robust-looking children are reduced, I should say that only those of the strongest constitutions could survive. As a large majority of the children do have it, it would seem to point to the fact that the natural vitality of the race is good, but its prevalence must, I think, impair that vitality.

The third cause—the epidemics of whooping-cough and influenza, is one which we are at present practically powerless about. Natives succumb to these diseases very readily for the reasons I have stated before—want of courage, and hope, and intractability when ill.

The training of the native medical students and the distribution of circular instructions dealing with the treatment of the epidemic, and a very careful watch for epidemics, and rigorous quarantine kept at ports of entry, are the only means to fight against epidemics.

In order to remedy these existing evils, to root out the active causes which are bringing about the premature decay of the race, and to promote more healthy conditions of life, physically, morally, and socially, immediate and decisive action is required. And the course I would suggest is, that a commission be appointed to inquire into, and report upon the sanitary condition of every village, to appoint new sites, and enforce the removal of the villages to such sites—the small and isolated villages to be abandoned, and every effort made towards centralisation—and also to suggest ways and means to execute and continue the reforms necessary.

The present Regulations which have bearing on the subject matter of this report should be revised, consolidated, and amended to give effect to the recommendations of the commission that may be thought necessary.

Centralisation is the key-note.

The law relating to vagrancy should be rigidly enforced; and though it may be of great inconvenience to some members of the community, the use of Fijian labour should be entirely prohibited for at least a period of three or four years. By this means some fourteen to fifteen hundred men, the life and vigour of some districts would be available to assist in building new towns.

The general result would be to start the habitations on a sound sanitary basis, and give an accession of health to the people. The centralisation of the villages would make them more accessible to those whose duty it would be to see to the proper sanitation, repair of houses, &c.; and the status of women should be reformed by Regulation if necessary.

The

The social position of their women I have often made the subject of discussion with Fijians and they readily, and without shame, acknowledge the fact that their women are in the main the workers and the men the drones. This, considering the length of time the various Christian missions have been at work on these islands, is a matter of some surprise, and one which might be brought publicly and strenuously to their notice.

Further, by centralisation, the information required to cure and prevent the spread of epidemics is more easily promulgated; there will be less opportunity to evade or make breaches of the law; the health and cleanliness of villages might be made the subject of rivalry and competition between the districts, which would bring its own reward; the native medical practitioners would have better access to the people, and should report monthly on the sanitation of their districts; the villages should be periodically inspected by some qualified officer, who should report to the Government the result of his inspection and general sanitary condition of the villages.

Offenders against Regulations of the nature I have stated as required, should be dealt with, for some time to come, in the Provincial Courts.

In conclusion, I must again state my conviction that it will only be by the complete emaucipation of the mothers of the race, together with a reformation of the sanitation of the villages, that the native race will be improved in vigour and stamina, both moral and physical.

I have, &c.,

JOHN R. FAREWELL.

No. 51.

Alexander J. Campbell, Planter, Natawarau, Ba, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Natawarau, 3 May, 1892.

In answer to Circular in reference to Decrease of the Native Population, I have the honour to lay before you a few remarks, out of which I trust something useful may be gathered.

Some of my remarks may seem rather strong, but I do not think they go beyond the facts.

The three months' exemption from Government work of husbands after their wife's confinement is a very judicious and humane measure, for previous to it coming in force I have often seen women with quite young children (three or four days' old) carrying heavy loads of food to the towns, while the husband was working under the chief's orders at tax or district work. Now the men look forward to the time as a holiday.

The principal causes of the decrease among children are, in my opinion:—(1) That the food the mother exists on is not of a rich milk-making nature by itself; for, although one may call the Fijians almost a "vegetarian" race, any one can notice the rapid falling off in condition of a native woman (not a chief's wife) when nursing; (2) The long period for which a great many children are suckled, tending to weaken the mother's constitution of which, of course, the next child feels the effects.

It is very easy to suggest causes for certain effects, but not so easy to point out a cure.

The natives, judging from the way they treat horses, would not attend properly to cows; but if they were town property, and an officer could be made responsible for their care and milking, any one wishing milk for weakly or sick children, could, on application to him, receive some. Goats are out of the question, on account of the destruction they would cause among the plantations, while the cows could be driven out every day to graze, and yarded or tethered at night.

The number of people who sleep in one house must be very unhealthy, more especially to young children who lie close to their mothers, and whose lungs the vitiated atmosphere must effect more than adults.

Any one going into a native house, especially in wet weather, cannot help noticing the close humid air, both visible to the ocular and olfactory organs.

I think if women and children slept on *vatas* instead of grass beds which, where young children are sleeping, are always more or less damp, it would be conducive to their health.

The most serious cause of the decrease of the population is undoubtedly the number of children conceived who never come to maturity in the mother's womb; and I have been told over and over again by old men that abortion is much more prevalent now than formerly. I have known many cases where young married and unmarried girls were said to be pregnant. I have not seen them for some time, and on asking their town-folk what had become of them, the answer would be, "Oh, they are sick, *sa lutu na gone*."

Superstition has also something to do with it, as Fijians believe that if a woman is unfaithful to her husband the offspring will not live.

It is a very common thing for young married women to conceive two or three times before a mature child is born, as the husband does not wish to be deprived of what he considers his connubial rights.

These things are often town talk and known to be true by every one, from the chief downwards; but not one case in fifty comes to the magistrate's ears. There is also more difficulty in proving cases, as the natives, men and women, are not nearly so afraid of swearing falsely now as they were ten years ago.

The nature of the soil in the Yasawas, and the diet, have, I have no doubt, to be accountable for the increase there. There always being more or less wind would tend to keep the people healthy.

Hoping some of these remarks may be of use.

I have, &c.,

ALEX. J. CAMPBELL.

No. 52.

G. Freeman Martin, Esq., Planter, Nadi, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Wagadra, Nadi, 2 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular letter of 5th February, $\frac{454}{1892}$. The absence of postal communication with this district has caused a delay in receipt of your circular that has carried it over the date to which reply was limited.

I will, however, state shortly what appears to me to be the most probable causes of the excessive mortality in very young children in the following order:—

1st.—The undue share of work thrown on the married women, more particularly the carrying of heavy burdens through all stages of pregnancy.

2nd.—The practice of sitting for many hours at a time, when pregnant, in water several days in each week, gathering shell-fish, &c.

3rd.—Incongruous marriages.

I have, &c.,

G. FREEMAN MARTIN.

P.S.—Being so late with reply, I have not gone into particulars for my conclusions. For reply to your second question, should there be any sound basis for such conclusions, remedial measures are on the face of them.—G. F. M.

No. 53.

George Gerrish, Esq., Storekeeper, Lakeba, to His Excellency the Governor.

May it please your Excellency,

Lakeba, 27 February, 1892.

In answer to your Excellency's Circular, requesting expression of my views in reference to causes of the large percentage of Deaths over Births, and predisposing causes of Mortality amongst Infants, I beg most respectfully to state:—

That, although for some time I have given consideration to the above, I cannot write out a treatise upon this matter, and which the subject requires, in the short time I have at my disposal; but trusting to be of some assistance in this important question, I venture to give some points and suggestions as they occur to me. I only write of the district of Lau, as each district has, or may have, other causes as well as those which have come under my observation in this part of the Colony. From the first moment of the mother's *enciente* state being made known, a system of drugging by herbs, barks, or leaves is entered upon—the person who administers the potion being generally ignorant of the properties of the drug or its uses; for, by the time the child is born, the mother has perhaps tried dozens of medicines and as many doctors. Then comes the midwife, who is not always a skilled person, and from the moment the child is born it is forced to commence taking these vile mixtures on its own account. If it survives this treatment, it has to undergo another ordeal, that of taking as food its mother's milk, or having food chewed, by perhaps a diseased person, and fed as pigeons feed their young.

The mother herself, in fully fifty per cent., being either scrofulous, cancerous, suffering some lung disease or from some other hereditary complaint, the grandmother or some other old woman invariably sleeps in the same screen as the child, thus by animal magnetism eating the child's life away. The mother's care of her infant is lax, and she is allowed to eat of unripe fruits and such rubbish whilst suckling the child; in many cases the house itself is only fit for a pig-sty. The mother often suckles the child until fifteen months old, and after the milk is unfit for food purposes; and in no case have the natives adopted the plan of keeping a milch goat, the milk to be used as food for their children. All Fiji children get the *coko*, and this is a cause of many children dying. I believe this disease is hurried on by the child being washed in the stink-holes the natives use as bathing-places; for those who have the *coko* and those who have not are washed in the same bath as, in very many cases, a woman with *vidikoso* has been washing. These holes have no outlet, so their state may be better imagined than described.

In the town of Tubou, Lakeba, thirty per cent. of the lads are troubled with hydrocele. This I ascribe to none of them wearing the *malo* or suspenders as formerly, and the disease comes on by straining when planting, carrying, or horse-riding. This of itself would be a great hinderance to matrimony. The drinking of *yagona* by the lads is also another cause of the hydrocele and kidney complaints now so common among them. This was not so formerly when the lads were *tabu'd* from drinking *yagona* in large quantities as they are allowed at present. The lads are also made to do most of the work, whilst their elders lazily look on. Both boys and girls often return to their homes late at night, and use their wet *sulus* as a covering when they lie down to sleep, and thus sow the seeds of disease. The continual gorging of unripe fruits is another source of disease, as is the eating of pigs which have died through disease; and the water generally drunk by the native community—it having first run over *taro* patches and through marshes. I know of very few springs used only as drinking-water on Lakeba or at any of the Lau islands, which are mostly badly supplied as a whole, such things as tanks being unthought of until a scarcity of water takes place.

Fishing, night and day; grave-yards being in close proximity to the towns; ditches and drains being left in a filthy state (which are only cleaned when a Stipendiary Magistrate or other Government official is about to visit, a notice of which is usually given beforehand); pig-sties being in the town, are not conducive to health or propagating the race. Still such are allowed in nearly every town in Lau; of course, there are exceptions, but these are very few.

So many of the young men being allowed from their district as sailors, police, teachers, students at Navuloa, apprentices at the Industrial School, visitors to other parts of the group, students at the various mission schools, not to mention those who go to Suva hospital and are mostly accompanied by others

others in health, and prisoners, are a great bar to increase of population, and chief cause of immorality of the young women. These things will all have to be legislated upon sooner or later, or, as the present old men die off (which, I am afraid, will be in a few years), there will be but few to supply their place, and the decrease of population will be rapid indeed.

I would most respectfully make the few following suggestions for your Excellency's consideration :—

1. That the present Ordinance relating to marriage be amended, so that it shall not be necessary for a young man and woman being desirous of marrying to have to go through so many forms as at present; for now, after getting the girl's consent, nearly all the members of both families have to assent, then the Bulis, next the Magistrates, at times the Rokos, before the banns can be published. Many marriages are broken off in consequence of the time that all these ceremonies take, either the man getting tired, or the woman taking to some other, and unvirtuous, there being no clause for breach of promise.

2. That the promise of the cat, if not actually applied, be the sentence to adulterous women. For, as Mr. Fison truly states as his opinion, that polygamy is not the cause of the decrease of Fijians, so do I affirm that a plurality of husbands would be a great cause of decrease.

3. That a medical man be appointed to collect all medicines, to know the use each is put to, and the knowledge of the Fiji doctor concerning its uses.

Each one professing to have a medicine to be forced to divulge what it is, and its use, and action. The medical man could then give his opinion as to its value, and whether it should be used or *tabu'd*.

A few only be allowed to use medicine of any kind; and only those who have the most knowledge of the medicine and its action be allowed to employ it; for I have seen people dosed with gallons of cold medicine for bowel complaint, where a dose of chlorodyne, hot fomentation, or a dose of opening medicine, as the case may have required should have been given. The patients mostly recover from natural causes, and when they recover lay it to the last medicine used, although it might have been the first used only having time to operate. In infants this is most observable, for the child cannot tell what ails it, and a course is taken that the child is dosed with some twenty or thirty different barks or leaves, those who administer them not only being ignorant of the different values, but of what ails the child.

4. That the drinking of medicine for purposes of deterring a woman becoming pregnant be *tabu'd*, unless authorised by an European medical man.

Trusting your Excellency will receive this in the same spirit as it is hastily penned.

I have, &c.,
GEO. GERRISH.

No. 54.

William Graburn, Esq., Superintendent, Native Technical School, Yanawai, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Native Technical School,
Yanawai, 5 March, 1892.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular, No. 277, of 30th December last, which reached me on the 22nd ultimo, with reference to the high rate of Mortality amongst the Natives, and to enclose to you herewith my reply thereto, with an apology for its lateness.

I have, &c.,
WM. GRABURN.

[Enclosure.]

WITH REFERENCE TO THE DECREASE IN THE NATIVE POPULATION OF FIJI, AND MORE ESPECIALLY THE HIGH RATE OF MORTALITY AMONGST INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

WE have learnt from the narrative of the first brave missionaries, who came to Fiji in 1835, that there existed in Fiji at the time of their arrival, beside the ills that flesh is heir to, three notable abnormal sources of mortality :—First, the revolting practice of cannibalism; second, the so-called poisonings by the heathen priests, which, however, seem to have been only the exercise of witchcraft, the superstitious fears of which proved as fatal as the exhibition of any deadly poison—(this superstitious fear of poison is still dormant in Fiji, and occasionally comes to the surface); third, the constant intertribal fighting.

That these three causes of mortality must have been answerable for a terrible annual death-roll we cannot doubt, but from the time of the arrival of the first missionaries, and chiefly by their earnest and courageous labours, and aided by the subsequent influx of aliens, these three causes of mortality were gradually suppressed, although they were not finally abolished until after the Annexation of the Colony, and the subjugation of the highland tribes of Colo, Vitilevu, in 1876.

Notwithstanding the gradual cessation of these three sources of mortality, we have evidence of the continuance of a high death-rate amongst the natives before the Cession of the Colony, when first an approximately correct census of the population became obtainable; and we are aware that the mortality during the epidemic of measles was prodigious. Perhaps it may not be out of place to relate an instance that came under my own observation corroborative of this high rate of mortality. In 1862, at Makogai, I worked twelve Fijians, and in 1863 fourteen. These were the first two gangs of Fijians who left their homes to work for a white man. These twenty-six men were obtained from the towns in Vitilevu Bay, and were all fine, healthy young men, one only being a youth of 16, one a man in his prime, and one, the chief, about ten years past his prime; and whilst with me there was little, if any, sickness amongst them. Sixteen years afterwards (in 1879) I vaccinated the population of the province of Ra; and upon reaching the town of Dranivau, in Vitilevu Bay, I was recognised by Anulo the youth, and by Nakisia, who was in his prime, of the two gangs who had been with me at Makogai; and from these two men I learnt the fate of each, by name, of the rest of those two gangs of twenty-six men, who, save two men then absent as labourers at Taviuni, were all dead. They told me that four or five had been killed in fights, that ten or twelve had died during the measles, that three had been eaten by sharks, and that four had died of other sickness. Thus, of twenty-six of what might be classed as the best lives in 1863, the opportunity was thus afforded me of obtaining this accurate evidence that only four survivors were to be found in 1879.

Antecedent to the advent of the measles, a considerable influx of aliens had already occurred, European cloth had come largely into use, coin as a medium of exchange had superseded barter or trade, and the alienation of the land had become common—facts all bearing their share in the institution of the great changes that were taking place amongst the natives, which finally led up to the Cession of the Colony, when new laws came into force. The power of the chiefs, founded of

of old upon their exercise of the old club law, in obedience to the introduction of the new laws of a settled Government, waned, until their authority retained only the prestige of their hereditary birthright. But it is a significant fact, not to be disregarded for the purpose of this inquiry, that club law, as exercised by the chiefs under their ancient *régime* in Fiji, had sufficed to keep in check the animal passions of their people, for in those days morality was the rule, its transgression the exception, for the penalty of its transgression was the club. But now a great social change was taking place, and a tide of immorality had set in which soon flowed over the whole land. This new departure was recognised as an evil by the chiefs; but, deprived of their use of the club, they were powerless to stem its torrent; nor did the new laws of a settled Government avail to check its progress, for, lacking the penalty of severe corporal punishment, the new laws have no terror for the Fijian, whose sense of honour, if it exists, is so slightly developed that imprisonment is no real punishment or disgrace to him, nor does it shame him in his own eyes or those of his fellows. Comparatively speaking therefore, unchecked, this evil of a widespread laxity of morals amongst the Fijian youth of both sexes has grown apace, until the grave charge cannot be burked that nowadays only a minority of the females have retained their virginity at the time of marriage, and, moreover, that the husband has ceased to look for virginity in his bride. Startling, perhaps, as this charge may appear to some, should it be doubted but the most cursory inquiry will serve to establish its pregnant truth; further inquiry will lead to the proof that the females commence fornication at an early age; and when this, as a matter of course, too frequently ends in pregnancy, they resort but too often to the use of medicines to procure abortion. Of old these medicines were only known to but a few of the old people and by them kept secret, but nowadays these medicines are almost universally known and as almost universally made use of. By the natives this practice of abortion during the first or second month of pregnancy, and even its frequent repetition, is held to be quite harmless to the woman, and it certainly is not looked upon as a crime; but it is admitted to be both difficult and somewhat dangerous at a more advanced stage of pregnancy, when abortion is no longer procurable by the use of medicines, but only by an operation, which also is practised. Its grave importance and its close connection with the subject and intent of the present inquiry may suggest the query to the medical profession as to whether the females of a race, given in early youth to fornication and to the habitual practice of abortion, and who do not shrink from its repetition before marriage, and not at all seldom after marriage, can become the mothers of perfectly healthy children? and, further, if this pernicious practice is not to a large extent accountable for the small families of the native women, amongst whom few have three living children, still fewer four, whilst the mothers of five living children are few and far between; and my Vaccination Register of above 26,000 of the population only shows two mothers of six living children, one found in the province of Nadroga and one in the province of Ba.

The epidemic of measles may, perhaps, be credited with having dealt the most deadly and lasting blow at the vitality of the Fijians. For my own part, I do not believe that the health of the people has been as good since as it was before the measles; and that fatal epidemic has been followed by the epidemics of whooping-cough, dengue fever, and influenza of the severe type, (influenza of a mild type had been long known,) until it is now certain that the infants of the present age have to run the gauntlet of a host of diseases that were unknown in Fiji before the advent of that fatal epidemic—the measles; and it may be admitted, I think, that no precautions could have averted the arrival in the Colony, sooner or later, of the measles. These diseases of modern times are of a type unknown to the natives, and for which they have no native medicines, and are diseases that prove specially fatal to infants, because these diseases demand treatment in nursing, diet, and the preservation of warmth which the mother knows not and fails to bestow on her child; and she is ignorant of the danger of her neglect. And mothers may be seen in the pursuit of their usual avocations, including fishing, and crab-hunting in the *tiri* swamps, in spite of any regulation to the contrary, and in all weathers, with their children on their backs. If remonstrated with, some reason is given for not being able to leave their children at home, and for the necessity of doing their work and for carrying their children with them; and it follows that the children are frequently exposed to wet and cold, and possibly to a dangerous extent, in this way.

Thus it appears demonstrable that savage races, first approached by missionaries with religious teachings, for their conversion to Christianity, are soon afterwards called upon to encounter the influx of aliens of a dominant race, and almost at a jump are expected to accept and to adopt their customs, laws, and civilisation—the result of ages of national advance—with the result that the ignorant savage is unequal to the effort demanded of him and succumbs, his fate hastened by the fact that the introduction of civilisation is inseparable from the contingent introduction of the diseases incidental to the dominant civilised alien race, who have learnt how to deal with those diseases, but which knowledge is not possessed by the savage. Thus the desirableness of his conversion to Christianity and the apparent advantages of his civilisation, as viewed from our side, the professed benefactors of the savage, have unfortunately proved fallacious through the inseparable introduction of new diseases that prove fatal to his race. To this fatality many other causes doubtless contribute more or less, and are ever in operation, but are not of such easy recognition nor capable of such precise definition as the agencies above set forth, which, apparently, are as far beyond control as is the advance of an epidemic by the attempted barrier of quarantine, and thus the problem of how to stay the visible decadence of the Fijians may well be held to be exceedingly difficult to solve. But, if the solution be not forthcoming, it is clear that effort at mitigation may be attempted—

1. To check the prevalent immorality;
2. To stamp out the crime of abortion;
3. The general improvement of the sanitary conditions under which the mass of the people dwell;
4. The storage of Fijian arrowroot in all towns to make provision for a supply of food in case of all the inhabitants being laid low at the same time by an epidemic, and none able to go out to the plantations to bring in food. (This happened in the measles, and starvation was the cause of death in every town in too many instances. This danger was felt to a certain extent in the recent epidemic at the close of last year.)

Upon the first two suggestions I offer no opinion.

(3.) The general improvement of the towns: for, if many towns have been removed from objectionable and unhealthy sites to drier and healthier positions, it is certain that still many more towns have to be inspected, condemned, and removed in like manner. That all houses in future shall be built upon foundations raised from 2 to 4 feet above the level, and the sides of the foundations to be faced with stones, as seen in Colo, Vitilevu. The rigid *tabu* of all towns to the intrusion of pigs within the precincts of the town. The towns are now disgustingly filthy with the excrement of that animal, which is again the scavenger of human excrement. A fence can be erected and maintained in pig-proof efficiency around every town, at a proper distance, excluding pigs under the severe penalty of the destruction of the pigs. To cause to be made two proper W.-Cs., *i.e.*, holes 10 feet deep, with a pig-proof fence around them, reeded for decency, one for the males and the other for the females of every *mataqali* in every town, and regulations compelling their use.

(4.) The storage of Fijian arrowroot commends itself because it is the only food non-attractive to rats, ants, and cockroaches. Empty kerosene tins provide a good receptacle, as well as a measure of contents. Fijian arrowroot simply wetted, packed in leaves, and heated on the fire, is very palatable eaten with a little salt, solid, and not unlike *madrai kai*, easily prepared, and good food for the sick. Still better would be the grated and sun-dried *vudi dina*, or plantain, which was in common use when I first came to Fiji, but I have not seen it of late years. This is the food recommended by Stanley in "Darkest Africa," but he calls the fruit bananas, evidently what we call plantains. I don't think it can be prepared from China bananas.

These suggestions I desire to supplement with the recommendation of the appointment of European Sanitary Inspectors, for a period at least extending to their furnishing a complete report upon all towns in all districts. The chiefs do not understand the duty of inspection of either towns or houses, and their inspection is but a farce. If this suggestion is deemed too expensive, I would respectfully ask how is it that a paternal Government has so long neglected so obvious a duty? And I am confident that, if the appointment of competent officers is made, their report will justify the expenditure; and, if a suspicion exists—which truly it may—that the unhealthy position and condition of very many of the towns is but partly accountable for the excessive mortality, such expenditure will be more than justified.

WM. GRABURN.

No. 55.

H. B. Smith, Esq., Planter, Werekanunu, Vanualevu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Werekanunu, 21 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular of February 3rd, respecting the Decrease in Native Population of this Colony. I am sorry to say that in consequence of the very poor means of communication between Levuka and this district, that your letter only reached me on the 16th instant, consequently the delay in replying to same.

In reply, I am of opinion,—

- (1) That intermarriage is the primary cause of the great mortality or decrease in the native population of this Colony;
- (2) That the unfortunate idea which native parents have, that their children are never healthy until they have had *coko*, consequently the utter neglect of children when suffering with this most distressing disease is one of the causes of the heavy mortality in children under one year of age;
- (3) The common practice of native women of remaining in the water (fishing) for hours at a time, when near their confinement, must be injurious;
- (4) Locally,—In a sanitary point a great many of the native towns are badly situated, have bad houses, with badly arranged and filthy bed-places;
- (5) The want of knowledge of proper treatment in sickness and the means to procure medical comforts, are out of the reach of the natives in most of the country districts;
- (6) My opinion is, that a competent person should be appointed to visit the native towns, with authority to enforce the most necessary sanitary regulations, and at the same time to have the power to order the removal of any town found to be in a bad situation. This would, I feel sure, remove a great many evils which exist at the present time.

I have, &c.,

H. B. SMITH.

No. 56.

G. A. F. W. Beauclerc, Esq., Clerk of Native Taxes and Native Accounts, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva, 11 April, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 5th ultimo, requesting an expression of views in respect of the alleged Decrease of the Native Population of this Colony.

I may say at once that I am not inclined to admit that the actual decrease during the interval between the census of 1881 and that of 1891, has been anything like so great as the statistics would show, and for the following reasons:—

Soon after the termination of the disastrous epidemic of measles which swept the Colony in the early part of 1875 statistics were published (I do not recollect whether by Government or not), which were accepted generally as approximately correct, and which showed that (1st) the measles had carried off about one-third of the entire native population; and (2nd) that the surviving native population numbered about 85,000.

The census return of 1881 shows the native population then to have been 114,748, representing an increase of more than a third within a period of only six years, or a rate at which the population should have doubled in less than fifteen years.

To ignore the census of 1881, and take the figures of 1875 and 1891 as both approximately correct, we would find a net increase during the sixteen years, of about 21,000, equal to 25 per cent., or a rate which, if maintained, would double the population once in fifty years.

I do not think that a belief in a higher rate of increase is admissible, and, therefore, if we are to take for granted that (what seems to be accepted in your letter), a steady decrease has been going on during recent years, the results of the 1891 census would have to be set aside as too high also; otherwise we are forced to the conclusion, that during the six years—1875 to 1881—the increase was over 25 per cent., a rate which, if maintained, would have doubled the population in less than twenty years.

Then the questions naturally arise—(1st), if the work of the native officials cannot be relied on as correct as regards the census of 1891, can their quarterly returns, from which I presume the accepted decrease is inferred, be relied on? and (2nd), is it not more probable that the census returns of 1891 are correct, for which specific instructions were given and every effort put forth to ensure correctness, than that the quarterly returns of the Provincial Scribes are correct, being based as they are on information received promiscuously from all sorts and classes of people?

The tendency of the above remarks is to the conclusion, that there has not been any decrease of the native population of the Colony as a whole within recent years; and, as I did not anticipate such a result when I began to write, I felt curious at this point as to how this conclusion might be corroborated or otherwise by the statistics of the Wesleyan Mission, as I happened to have some of their annual reports by me.

On consulting the reports for the years 1879, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, and 1889, I find the numbers given as "Attendants on Public Worship" to be 100,385, 100,331, 100,154, 101,150, 102,891, and 103,755. These figures show a slight decrease from 1879 to 1885—equal to 231 for the six years, and an increase from 1885 to 1889 of 3,601 for the four years—and they represent the entire native population, except the Roman Catholics; and as they are affected but slightly by accessions from the Roman Catholics, the net increase of population here represented as having taken place in the ten years

years, 1879 to 1889, is 3,370—equal to about 33 per mille, a rate which would require about two hundred and twenty years to double the population—but still an increase.

I am inclined to take these Wesleyan Mission figures as approximately correct, for this reason only that the native ministers and teachers who make the calculations have been trained to the work, the same men doing it every year, except as year by year a few drop out and few others fall into their places; and they would tend to corroborate the conclusion, I have already indicated, namely, that the official census of 1881 was probably 12,000 or 13,000 too high, and the census of 1891 probably about right, and that instead of a steady decrease of the population, there has been an increase rapid for the first few years after the measles, and very slight since.

If this conclusion be correct, the question to be answered would be not, "Why is the population decreasing?" but "Why is the increase so infinitesimally small?" Practically the same question, but somewhat modified.

No matter which set of figures we accept we find this contrast, namely, that for the first six years after the measles the increase of population was extremely rapid, and during the succeeding ten, either extremely slow or changed to a decrease.

The figures given in your letter would show that as regards other countries, and presumably more favourably circumstanced countries, the birth-rate of Fiji has been unusually high, and the death-rate unusually high to a much greater extent.

Although I have thrown a doubt on the absolute correctness of the statistics, I think we must accept them so far as to believe that the birth-rate continues to fully equal that of other countries, and that the death-rate amongst children is abnormally high; the general death-rate being almost equal to, or slightly over, the birth-rate. Therefore the mortality of children alone accounts for the decrease or slowness of increase of the population, and the cause of that mortality alone need be sought in the present inquiry. Were it otherwise, I should find it difficult to suggest an answer as I know of no new condition, but one, calculated to increase mortality to any extent amongst adults.

It has been pointed out in your letter that in other groups of islands the population is also decreasing, but I do not think that we must, therefore, seek for one cause common to all the groups.

In Fiji, I believe that the rapid increase after the measles arose from the facts—(1st), that after a great decrease of population in any country caused by war, pestilence, &c., there is generally, if not always, an abnormally rapid increase; and (2nd), that the common people of Fiji had imbibed the idea somehow, that the annexation of the islands by Great Britain would bring about at once a complete cessation of tyranny, and that the result of this belief was a temporary raising of the spirits of the people and a feeling of happiness by anticipation; and I have no doubt that a similar belief to some extent possessed the chiefs, so that, for a few years, oppression was actually less than prior to Annexation.

And I am fully convinced that the oppression of the chiefs has gradually increased, until not only the people groan under it, but, in their abject dread of worse, hide their groaning when they have any fear that their complaints, coupled with their names, might be reported. It is pretty well known to every one who knows the common people that this oppression exists. Why it should be so is found in the fact that, while British law naturally protects the oppressive chief from reprisals such as would have taken place in the olden time, it requires effort and more ingenuity than the common people possess to put the same law in operation to protect them from the oppression.

Some writers have laid all the blame to the account of the Native Taxation Scheme. I do not and never did look upon that as even a factor in the case, except in so far as it is used by chiefs as a lever to help them in other levies.

The service which hurts the people is the continual exactions of the chiefs for their own personal aggrandisement, by which (added to the preparation of tax produce) the men are kept in such continuous servitude that they have not time to provide sufficient food supplies for their families, or proper dwellings, and by which the women also have to render service, not only when they are free from other cares, but when they are child-bearing, and afterwards when the nurture and care of their infants demand, but cannot obtain, their full attention. The result of this is, that not only are children born debilitated and eventually die young, but others which are born healthy become, through after neglect, weak, and die off.

There are other causes which have grown up under Christianity and civilisation which tend in the same direction, but, I think, affect the death-rate only to a very slight extent, but still should be mentioned:—

- 1st. The abolition of polygamy and concubinage, by which many women—who would, as the wives of chiefs, have had more leisure to look after their children, or, as the wives of men of good physique, would have borne more healthy offspring—are now the wives of an inferior class of men who under a polygamous régime would probably never obtain wives;
- 2nd. The abandonment of many villages which in ancient war times existed on healthy hill sites, and the establishment in their stead of villages on lowlands, flat and undrained, and, worse still, on mangrove-swamp lands—(this I consider the only special cause of increased mortality amongst adults);
- 3rd. The practice of drinking *yaqoua* excessively, which of very recent years has spread itself over all classes of the community, including boys and girls, and the use of tobacco, which is also universal but of somewhat older date—(I think it will be admitted on all hands that the excessive indulgence in either of these habits by young persons, and especially by young women, will have a debilitating effect on their generative powers, but whether resulting in a limited number of births, or in the birth of debilitated children, I am not in a position to say, but am inclined to think both);
- 4th. The unrestricted association of the sexes which is growing up, and which frequently results in illegitimate pregnancy and the procuring of abortion and the permanent debility of the female, is probably a very small factor; as is also

5th.

5th. The practice of drinking decoctions which produce barrenness and sterility.

To remedy the evil, I would respectfully offer the following suggestions, and in doing so will take the minor matters first:—

For No. 1 no remedy seems possible, because the theory that polygamy and concubinage are (no matter how regulated) sins is too deeply engrained in Christendom to admit of any hope that they shall ever be permitted in any Christian community.

No. 2 could be remedied by prohibiting the building of villages on unhealthy sites, and by ordering the immediate removal of all villages at present so situated to sheltered situations on the sides of hills (not to hilltops).

No. 3 might be cured by a law limiting the use of yaqona to adult men (a much wider limit than in ancient times), and the use of tobacco to adult men and women, that is to say people who are classed as *uabula* in the native statistics.

No. 5 should be prohibited by law under a heavy penalty of imprisonment.

For No. 4 it is hopeless to expect a remedy as long as prostitutes, men who act as pimps, brothel-keepers (male and female), courtesans temporarily kept by single and married white men, and men (white and black) who are noted for immorality, are accepted as on equal footing of respectability with the rest of the community. The only remedy for this state of things is to educate public opinion up to the point that will lead respectable people (white and black) to consider it a disgrace to be on terms of intimacy with such people.

For the main evil (the oppression of chiefs) the ready suggestion would be (and I think has been made) to abolish by law, under heavy penalties, the right of the chiefs to make levies (*lala*) of any kind. That would be utterly unjust as well as impolitic, no matter on what conditions.

The suggestion which I would submit would be to appoint the English magistrates as Resident Commissioners, and make it their duty to find out and report to the Governor every case of levy (*lala*) made by any chief in his district, and the object for which such levy was made, whether by the Roko or inferior chiefs, and accompany such report with an expression of his opinion as to whether such levy was legitimate or not. The magistrate should have no authority to interfere except by order of the Governor.

I do not for a moment suggest that defaulting chiefs should be either imprisoned or fined, as both these forms of punishment would strike the common people themselves. The imprisonment of a hereditary chief, no matter how great his tyranny, would be felt and grieved over as the imprisonment of the father of the people, while fines would be paid by the people themselves by a secret levy. The only punishment I could suggest would be deportation to a place where he would be under surveillance, and his support there, in a position becoming his rank, provided for by just levies made on his own people under the direction of the Governor and the supervision of the Resident Commissioner.

I have, &c.,

G. A. F. W. BEAUCLERC.

No. 57.

A. H. Simpson, Esq., Storekeeper, Kadavu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Kadavu, 4 April, 1892.

In answer to your Circular, in which His Excellency the Governor asks for information on the subject of the great Mortality among Infants, I have the honour to inform you that I am of opinion that the cause of so many deaths among infants lies with the mothers in not nursing and attending their children properly. The Temperance party say that it is through the women smoking and drinking Fiji yaqona. There may be some truth in what they state, but whether the Temperance party's children are free from the same mortality remains to be seen.

Speaking of a remedy: time will work its own now that the Fiji women have set aside many of their Fijian customs and rules, and are copying their white sisters in many ways. Such being the case it would be well in the meantime to place within their reach a few simple articles of infant's food for the use of the children, and light and easy local laws for the benefit of the women.

I have, &c.,

A. H. SIMPSON.

No. 58.

J. Malcolm Lenox, Esq., Planter, Cicia, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Lomaji, Cicia, 3 March, 1892.

I had the honour to receive your Circular relating to Mortality in Infants of Native Races; and which, after careful reading, appears to me to be concentrated in the two questions at the foot of page 5. In my opinion the high death-rate among children is due chiefly to the gradual change of customs owing to intercourse with whites, such as:—

1. Amount of food planted or provided;
2. Sexual intercourse too soon after confinement, and called *dabe*;
3. Mothers averse to suckle infants unrelated to them;
4. Disease—*coko*;
5. Mothers' neglect to feed infants while fishing;

6. Adultery connived at ;
7. Fornication increasing ;

are amongst the many causes, but I think No. 1 the most important.

1. With regard to food.—If the mothers are insufficiently nourished their infants must suffer. Less than one quarter of yams are planted to what used to be before the measles ; and in this district I noted the decrease after Maafu's death, and when lease-moneys were paid to natives.

The law regarding planting food is not properly enforced ; the food indeed being planted, but in many cases never visited afterwards either by the planter or officer.

Too many pigs and dogs, half-starved, prowling about the villages. I would suggest limiting the former and taxing the latter.

Native boats wandering about take large quantities of food from the island.

The native system of relations (mostly the lazy ones) helping themselves from other's gardens causes quantities of food to be used unripe, and prevents an industrious man from benefiting from his work.

2 and 3 require no comment, and cannot be legislated for.

4. *Coko* or *toni*.—A disease often fatal and frequently carried through a long lifetime. Disabuse the native mind that infants must have this disease ; teach cleanliness during suckling ; and, if the filthy, dirty villages were under some one's supervision, I believe this disease could be almost eradicated.

6 and 7. As a rule, natives dislike "running in," and I have known husbands to accept money as a *soro*. And, again, imprisonment is really not dreaded, and consequently deters but little. Could not imprisonment be made a real punishment and disgrace ?

I could, and should like to, write more on these subjects that you have done me the honour to invite my opinion upon, but your circular only reached me yesterday, and, if not answered now, I may not have another chance of a mail for a month.

I have, &c.,
J. M. LENOX.

No. 59.

David Wilkinson, Esq., Planter, Bua (and formerly Commissioner for Native Affairs), to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Dear Sir,

Wailailai, Bua, March, 1892.

I was pleased to receive your Circular of the 30th December, which did not reach me until six weeks after date, on the subject of the Decrease in the Native Population.

I am glad to learn that this subject is about to receive the consideration which it deserves, and to have the privilege, in common with my fellow-colonists, of expressing my views and opinions upon this very important matter.

I am one of what is probably a small minority, who entertain a belief that the people of these islands, as a race, may yet be saved, notwithstanding the oft-repeated prophecy that they must, like all other similar races, die out and disappear before the face of the white man. My hope is strengthened by the *resumé* of vital statistics of the native population which accompanied the circular, and which confirms the conclusion at which I have arrived, after an intercourse with the people extending over many years, that there is no tangible or physical reason in the Fijian race or its surroundings why it should pass away.

I agree with a paragraph in the circular to the effect that there are differences between the Fijian and other races in the Pacific. And, though some of them may be only in degree, they indicate a greater possibility of the permanence of the Fijian race as compared with the New Zealander, Tongan, Samoan, Tahitian, and Hawaiian.

The most marked differences are the proved and sustained fecundity of the Fijians, and the general contentment of the people. For, if reports and statistics are to be credited, both these features are almost entirely wanting in the abovenamed races.

Another hopeful feature disclosed in the *resumé* of vital statistics is that the rate of decrease is diminishing, as also the death-rate amongst children under one year of age. The number of deaths among children under one year of age was, in 1886, 1,844 ; in 1888, only 1,492 ; showing a saving of 352 lives in the latter year as compared with the former. The decrease in infant mortality shown by the statistics is confirmed by my own observation ; and, should the improvement continue through the decade, the decrease will probably have disappeared at the next census. This result is to be devoutly hoped for, and I am strongly disposed to believe is quite probable, always presuming that the Colony is not visited in the meantime by some fell epidemic. But even such a calamity should not be viewed with too great anxiety in the case of a people with such a high birth-rate, a fine climate, an abundance of food, and a secured absence from internecine war.

With regard to the enumeration of the people, I would say that unquestionably a census arrived at by writing down on paper the name of every individual is the most reliable ; and the census taken in 1881 can only be taken as approximate. It would be interesting to ascertain how near the decrease shown by the returns of births and deaths approximates to that shown by a comparison of the census of 1879 and 1881.

Before entering upon the two questions submitted by His Excellency in the circular, I should like to refer to one or two matters tending to show a comparison between the present and the former rates of decrease. A decrease in the population of the whole Colony of 8,000 in a decade would be (if it actually occurred) deplorable ; but between the years 1865 and 1871 a decrease of over 8,000 took place within the province of Bua alone.

In

In 1865 I took a census of the State of Bua, as then constituted, which showed a population of over 35,000. I went through every town and village in the chiefdom, except the buliships of Wainunu and Dreketi. The latter, owing to one of Ritova's wars, was at the time uninhabited. Wainunu was considered to be too heathen and unsettled to allow of my visiting each town. I therefore estimated its population at about 4,000, which subsequent observation showed to be within the actual number. Kubulau was in very much the same condition as Dreketi by reason of the Wainunu wars; but when, in 1865, the people were replaced upon their lands by Tui Bua and Tui Cakau jointly, they numbered over 3,000. This would make the population of Bua, in 1865, considerably over 40,000.

At that time returns of births and deaths were only just instituted, and were neither complete nor reliable; but, so far as they went, they confirmed what had been so often repeated by the early missionaries and old hands, that "the people were fast dying off."

On reference to some notes I made in 1871 for the information of the *Bose* of Chiefs at Bua, I find it stated that within six years more than 8,000 people had passed away, over and above the number born during the same time. For better illustration to the chiefs I had classified the towns of each buliship, showing those which had an increase and those with a decrease. Throughout the chiefdom there were three of the latter to one of the former. Of the towns with a decrease there were two divisions; one showed two births to eight deaths, and the other three births to five deaths. This was the most practical way of placing the matter clearly before the chiefs. Excepting in the Yasawa Group, almost all the towns showing an increase were those of inland tribes. In the buliship of Yasawa a large majority of the towns showed a slight increase from births over deaths. So that the decrease of 8,000 within the six years was confined chiefly to the coast towns of Vanualevu, within the chiefdom of Bua. My returns ended in 1872; but at the time of Annexation the rate of decrease—caused mainly through incessant wars—had certainly not diminished, and there can be little doubt that the population of Bua (including the Yasawa Group, which had been for some time placed under the Ra province), was considerably under 20,000.

At the time of the census taken by me in 1865 the population of Yasawa Group was (including 285 reported as absent from their homes) 9,080. The births and deaths returns were never sufficiently complete to form reliable data; but so far as they went, and according to my own observation, there was probably no decrease from the above date till the buliship ceased to be under the government of the late Tui Bua. It was then at peace within itself, and no levies of men were made from the group. But in the negotiations in 1871 for the formation of a general Government under Cakobau, Tui Bua gave up his right of control over the Yasawa Islands, and from that time to the census of 1879, which gave the population as 2,950, there was an actual decrease of over 6,000. Of course the measles scourge had in the meantime swept over the whole Colony and carried off its tens of thousands; yet it is but right to say that that terrible calamity had been very materially assisted by the course pursued by the then Roko Tui Ra (Ratu Isikeli) and other Bau chiefs, who, immediately the Yasawa Group passed from under the control of the late Tui Bua, commenced a system of labour raids, and removed the people by scores and hundreds to other parts of the Colony. According to the census of 1879, the population of Bua had dwindled to below 6,500; so that, if we add the populations of Yasawa and Dreketi (which were no longer under Bua), there were little over 10,000 left of the 40,000 that were on the same area in 1865—fourteen years previous. And, even if half of this decrease occurred during the period of the measles, the decrease from other causes must still be regarded as "appalling."

Unless it can be shown that there were exceptional causes at work in the chiefdom of Bua—and I am not aware of any—it is reasonable to suppose that the same "dying out" was going on throughout the Group. My experience, both prior and subsequently to 1865, of other chiefdoms leads me to believe that the decrease in Bua was not exceptional.

And I am quite satisfied that the main cause was the perpetual warfare carried on between tribe and tribe. There can hardly be any doubt that 75 per cent. of the deaths previous to 1871–2 arose, directly or indirectly, from incessant wars: not from the numbers killed in actual hostilities, but from the terrible havoc caused by the burning of towns, the destruction of food plantations and of fruit trees, and from distress and exposure. Whether scattered abroad through the bush for months, and sometimes for years, or huddled together within small fences or fortified places, the people had to suffer from want of food.

During a war in Cakaudrove, in 1863–4, over forty towns and villages that I knew were destroyed (I saw eleven burnt on one day). Probably none of these had less than 100 inhabitants, and some had certainly over 500. Of all these towns only five were ever reoccupied, and then with only a remnant of those who had occupied them three or four years previously.

Within this and the Macuata provinces several towns and tribes have passed away altogether. Some, which were large and powerful when I first came, cannot now probably number ten individuals. Many an old chief have I met in after years living in another's town who, when I have asked, Where are all your people? has given the one answer, "Dead! all dead!" Chiefs who could have produced from 50 to 100 fighting men at the call of their superior are now perhaps the head of some small *matagali*.

Much of this may be considered a digression, but it is evidence which shows that the supposed decrease in the last decade is but a drop in the bucket compared with the rate previous to 1872; that the lower death-rate is due to permanent and secured peace amongst the tribes themselves; and that the diminishing rate of decrease is mainly due to "influences arising out of a settled authority" over the people, which is getting to be better understood and more appreciated than it was during the early years after the Cession.

PART I.

What are the predisposing causes of this Mortality?

My remarks will be confined chiefly to "the phenomenal rate of mortality among infants."

Native opinions upon questions affecting themselves and their wellbeing as a race may, perhaps, be crude and even untenable if subjected to strict scientific rules. Yet I do not think it well, or wise, to reject such opinions altogether because they are not "on all fours" with recognised usages in civilised communities. It will generally be found that their reasons and opinions have better ground than at first one is able to realise, very often because we do not altogether understand or appreciate the almost stubborn tenacity with which they cling to their *vakaviti* or time-immemorial usages of daily life, and practically reject or misapply progressive measures, however well calculated to suit their condition and conserve their best interests.

For these reasons I do not think I can better preface what I have to say in reply to this first question than by giving the following deliverances of an old chief and *matanivanua*, who, when the subject of the high death-rate and the decrease of the population was under discussion at the *Bose Vakaturaga*, said, "Hear me, and I will give you the root of the matter."

- 1st. "In this age our women have liberty to wed or reject whom they please. It is not as in bygone days when their elders and relatives chose the husband most suitable for them. That," said he, crooking down his thumb, "is one reason."
- 2nd. "Our women, both young and married, smoke tobacco and drink yagona, both of which were *tabu* in our bygone age. And that," said he, crooking down his forefinger, "is No. 2."
- 3rd. "*Gone dabe*"—[*Cohabitation before the last child is weaned.*]—and he crooked down his second finger, saying, "that is No. 3."
- 4th. "There are no *buinigone*—[*Grandmothers, or nurses.*]—to take care of and feed the child when the mother casts it off. The measles devoured all the old women off the face of the land."
- 5th. "In these days, Sir, the birth of the child is not prepared for as of old. No oil or turmeric is prepared, and, Sir, when the child is born, proper food is not given to the mother. She is left to do the best she can, and we soon hear her child is dead." Then, crooking down his little finger, he held up his doubled hand and said, "There, Sir, all five are down. I could go to the second hand, for there are many small things; but these I have given are the root of the matter."

I am quite disposed to agree with the old chief's opinions; and, though they may not comprehend all the predisposing causes, they certainly cover some of the most important. I will leave the more particular consideration of each head until I deal with the second question, and will proceed to enumerate a few other matters which are at least of sufficient importance not to be passed over.

- 6th. The sites and condition of towns.—No doubt during the past ten years a number of towns have been moved, not always, perhaps, to the best sites obtainable. There are many questions arising in the consideration of the moving of a native town. One in particular, which must receive equal attention with important sanitary questions is, Will the people be content on the new situation? If this is not clear, a change may be more disastrous than leaving a town on an acknowledged bad site.
- 7th. The condition of towns.—As far as I am able to judge, this is often the very opposite of what it ought to be. Wild growth is allowed to accumulate and becomes a cover for all kinds of decaying vegetable and other matter which cannot but be noxious to health; the pig nuisance is, if anything, worse and greatly increases the evil; as a rule, if there is not sufficient natural drainage there is really none at all, and, as a result (especially during the wet season), pools of filthy water and mud are formed round the houses and in front of the doors. The effect upon sick and weakly persons, and especially upon young children, can only be injurious to health, seeing that in the driest districts this state of things must continue for four months at least in every year. Effective surface-drainage is the remedy; and there are few towns so situated that the natives could not carry it out themselves, or with a very little direction. One of the chief causes of pools of water round the houses is the digging of the earth to form raised foundations. This is a most important matter in order to have dry and healthy houses. But a drain should be made from each house sufficient to carry off the surface-water at least. In some places a path is formed to each new house. Gutters are dug out on each side, the earth from which is used for the foundations, thus providing drainage, and obviating the necessity of digging round the house.
- 8th. Since Annexation vast improvements have been effected in the people's houses, both as regards their character and the number having to live under one roof. Previous to Annexation it was common for three or four (and in one Nadroga town I have known five) married couples to live in the same house. But even now houses are not what they should be. They are allowed to get very leaky before an attempt is made to either repair or replace them. I have seen houses, which for months had been unfit to live in, with families huddled up in a corner, with all sorts of contrivances to keep the rain off the bed-place, while the middle, or wet parts of the floor would be in a perfect state of mire and filth.
- 9th. An important consideration is the people's drinking-water supply. The natives generally believe themselves to be very particular about their drinking-water. But it only amounts to this, that the water must be clear, without any reference to the source of its supply or its surroundings. It may come from close to or below a graveyard, or from a well the top of which is surrounded by puddles and holes full of every imaginable filth. The people are great drinkers of water, both while at work and after their food; which of course vastly increases the evil

evil if the common source of drinking-water in any town be impure, or liable even to occasional contamination.

10th. I will reserve most of what I have to say on the food supply, as it is hardly to be doubted that in these days there is generally sufficient food for the people throughout the year. Occasionally, no doubt, from causes over which they have no control—such as a long drought, or excessive wet, or hurricane—certain localities suffer. But there is nothing to be compared with the annual season of *dausiga*, or scarcity, which used to last three or four months every year; when the people had to subsist upon roots and fruits hardly fit for pigs, and only obtained and made eatable after excessive labour by the whole community—men, women, and children.

11th. Attention to the sick.—Professedly the Fijians are attentive to their sick. In reality there cannot be the slightest doubt that many deaths are hastened, if not caused, through neglect, as well as by following wrong means. Many of the native remedies, good in themselves, are surrounded by so much that is superstitious and mystic in character that the real good which might follow a simple administration is very often entirely nugatory, while their surgical practice is often simply barbarous. Another very unsatisfactory feature is the fitful and spasmodic character of the assistance given to the sick. Some one says, “So-and-so is sick, and his fire has gone out,” whereupon the whole of the village will turn to and carry in firewood. But the aged sick often complains, “Yes, they have brought my firewood, but no one comes to put a little on the fire, or place it within my reach so that I may put it on myself and keep warm.” Again, a sick person may express a desire for some particular food. It may be fowl-soup. A fowl is immediately cooked and a very good soup made, of which the patient gets a sip or two, and the rest of the family, and probably the neighbours, consume the fowl and all; for it is considered a proper thing to go and eat with the sick. But if a little care had been exercised a patient might have derived the greatest benefit for one or two days. But discretion or economy would be considered mean and inhospitable, and the whole family would be stigmatised. There are few common people (only the more intelligent) who have the courage to disregard such folly. In many parts of the Group there is a deep-seated prejudice against white men’s methods and means. When such are available they are not often applied for, and even when obtained are but rarely used until every other *wai* owner (possessor of a supposed cure) has exhausted his stock of remedies. From this cause the work of the trained native medical practitioner is very much circumscribed. Very few will apply to him at first. Many not at all. It is often only when every Fijian *wai* has been tried in vain, and the sick man or woman is dying, that the doctor is sent for. I thoroughly sympathise with the young practitioner in this province. He is diligent, painstaking, and evidently enthusiastic in his profession. He has often told me that such and such a person died because proper remedies were not administered at first. What was probably in its origin only a slight cold or fever, had been trifled with, and the patient allowed to lie, getting weaker and weaker, until, complications intervening, there was no strength to rally or second the proper remedies when applied. In such a case, when death follows, some wise woman says, “There you are, the white man’s drugs killed him!” Or, if the trained practitioner’s advice or remedies are rejected, and the patient dies, the old *vuniwai* (native medicine-man) says, “There, your consulting the doctor and talking about white man’s medicine spoilt the *mana* (potency) of my *wai*. The gods were angry and the man died. How could it be otherwise?”

PART II.

What remedies are practicable?

It goes without saying that it is much easier to ask this question than to give an answer which shall be at once effective and practical. I fear that I cannot contribute much towards a satisfactory solution, while, with no desire to shirk any responsibility involved, but with a deep sympathy for the people themselves and with those who are seeking to promote their welfare, I cannot but feel the importance of the subject under consideration, and the vital issues at stake should any suggestion made be adopted, even merely in part.

In attempting to reply to the second question submitted by His Excellency, I wish first to consider the causes or evils indicated by the old *matanivanua* chief. Because I believe that they contain much that is true from a native point of view, and because I have a very strong conviction, confirmed by years of experience and observation, that if the race is to be saved from extinction, it must be by themselves; and because, once the more intelligent of the people understand their changed conditions and existing evils, they are by far the most likely to succeed in the practical application of remedies devised, although they may not always be able to hit upon them unassisted.

1. While I believe there is a good deal of truth in the statement that it is an evil for a Fijian girl to be unrestrained in the choice of a husband, yet to discuss a return to the ancient usages in such matters would only be a waste of time. Even if it were advisable it is impracticable. But I think the marriage of very young girls ought, as far as possible, to be discouraged. It is fraught with evils, many of which will appear later on. There is another view to be taken with regard to marriages. I think evil often arises from friends taking too active a part in preventing marriages on most trivial grounds. One objection commonly raised is, that it has not been customary for members of a certain tribe or *matagali* to marry into certain other tribes or *matagalis*. One often hears some old woman say, “Whoever heard of our *gali* going to *gali* so-and-so for a wife or a husband?” or another, “Who is going to supply wives to *gali* so-and-so?”

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While I, on the one hand, deprecate interference with old usages, yet there is at the present day too much freedom of intercourse between all tribes and grades, for either males or females to be limited in their loves by such ancient landmarks.

I would make two suggestions: first, that when the marriage of any couple is opposed on any trivial grounds, either or both should have a right to appeal to the Buli, and if they reside in different buliships, to the two Bulis jointly—all parties, of course, having a right to be heard; second, that when any case of fornication comes before the Court, the magistrate shall ask the parties why they have not got married, and if they say that they have been prevented, or express a desire to marry, let the case be withdrawn to give them time to get through the preliminaries, and to wed if they really feel disposed to do so. If something of this nature were adopted some very serious evils would be greatly lessened, if not altogether avoided. I have heard a young woman (a mother) complain that she did not get any help in nursing, because her relatives had objected to her marrying the father of her child. And I have heard of young mothers, who had entered on distasteful marriages arranged for them by their mothers, aunts, or other relatives, saying to the latter, "Take the thing (child) your friend has got: I hate you all!" I once saw a young mother with a sickly child, hardly a month old, whose crying she appeared unable to stay, push it away towards her mother, saying "Take your child, the offspring of your wishes and rear it. Why should I be worn out with it?" and getting up she left the house. The grandmother picked up the little one, and turning to me said, "A heathen; a veritable devil."

Yet again, in some of the happiest and most successful marriages I have known amongst Fijians contracted in the old days, the bride had to be coerced—aye, dragged, and, in a seuse, held—while the ceremony was performed, under fear of some terrible punishment if she refused; and in other cases were only consummated by her friends carrying the bride to her husband's house by force. It is often said that much of this has only been put on, in order to give the wife a chance of saying to her husband when they have a tiff, "Was I not dragged here? It would be another thing if I had elected to come to you." And it was considered good ground for a wife running away to her old home for a time.

2. There can be no doubt that the excessive use of either tobacco or *yagona*, and especially of both (which is no doubt the rule in Fiji), must be injurious. There is a deep-seated impression amongst the people, that drinking *yagona* can be nothing but injurious to married women, whatever it may be to others; and it is only within late years that it has been indulged in by them. But as I have an impression that the use both of tobacco and *yagona* is dealt with by Regulation, I will only add that I think it ought to be discouraged by every practicable means, particularly as regards *yagona* and its use by married women.

3. *Gone dabe*.—This may be translated as cohabitation of husband and wife before their last child is weaned (unless when the child is wet-nursed, which was a thing never heard of previous to the introduction of Christianity). There is not a doubt that there is a good deal in it, and that it very seriously effects the question under consideration. It is generally said, "Once the mother becomes pregnant again, her care for her last child (animal like) becomes less, until it is a *luve ni yali* (entirely neglected), sickens and dies." But the revival of the old practice, of separating husband and wife for two or three years from marital intercourse, seems to me out of the question even if were shown that it would be beneficial to the race generally. The most important question (except nurses) is that of suitable food for the weaning-child, which will be considered later on.

4. *Buinigone*.—No grandmothers, aunts, or elderly women as nurses, to help the mother to take care of the weaning-child, as was usual before the epidemic of measles swept away, as at one stroke, all the aged men and women. There cannot be the slightest doubt that this is a real and serious want, and I fear there is no remedy for it beyond that which time and natural causes will bring about, and the want is of course already being met to some extent by widowed aunts and mothers of young women now marrying. The questions of nurses and suitable food for the weaning-child are really one. For whatever may be the supply of food, it is of little use to the hungry child if there be no one to see to its preparation, and to give it to the child when prepared.

I would suggest that the general question of the care of children be brought up at each monthly buliship meeting, with particular reference to the *buinigone* and the preparation of suitable food, and that the chief of each town be required to answer the question, "Are the children of your town properly cared for?"

5. The birth of the child is not prepared for as in former times.—There are not two opinions among the people as to the importance of the articles enumerated under this head, namely, oil, turmeric, and suitable food for the nursing-mother. And I fear that this improvidence still continues. Some-time ago I spoke on the subject of the number of deaths among children to one of the wise woman, a midwife, and one of the more sensible and intelligent of her class. She said "No wonder children die, Sir, it is as though their mothers did not intend them to live. Very often I am sent for and no preparation has been made. I ask for oil. There is none in the house, and I have to send or go myself to some other house and beg some—often there is not the little mat to lay the child upon—the child gets dry before the oil comes." What about turmeric? "Oh, Sir, the age for that is past. It is discouraged by the *lotu*, and there is too much laziness for it to be prepared, and it is very seldom used now, except by some inland people. The use of oil and turmeric is very good. They do for the outside what the mother's milk does for the inside. They warm and strengthen the child."

What about food for the mother? "Some husbands, Sir, see that their wives have good and suitable food for the time, but many others do not do so. Nuts are so often *tabu*, that when the mother asks for a *bu* she cannot get many. But, Sir, you cannot understand the importance of these things to us Fijian women. Oil is our bath, our soap, our clothing. No child, however young, is cold if well oiled." Why is oil not more used? "Oh, the men say it is difficult because the nuts are *tabu*. But, Sir, it is laziness. Laziness and improvidence are the root of it. And there are no chiefs in this day to enforce the useful and right thing. We Fijians, Sir, are not ignorant of what is necessary and good

good. We know how to prepare it; but, Sir, we are lazy, and we are indifferent. We no longer fear to neglect."

My own observation, so far as it goes, is confirmatory of the old woman's sentiments. It is improvidence—not ignorance—improvidence that one meets at every turn; and there is no power at hand to practically enforce natural and well-understood duties. Once, independently of the power of the chief, the *matagali* or cofamily influence was sufficient to enforce rightdoing. The very obloquy that would be heaped upon those neglecting to provide the usual necessities was in itself a power and stimulant to do the right thing. But now indifference seems to reign supreme. It is often said that the mother, seeing and suffering from the improvidence of her husband or household, becomes indifferent and careless herself, the child sickens and dies; to all appearance unregretted by those whose duty it was to cherish and succour its young life.

If the allegation is true of the people in general, it clearly demands the direct interference of some authority capable of at once dealing with the evil, so as to lessen, and in time remedy it altogether. But I confess I am not so clear about the kind of interference, or the authority best able to deal with the matter. The preparation of oil, turmeric, mats, *masi*, &c., appears to be the work of the wife; but she is generally assisted by her friends, who either help in the preparation, or make presentations of different articles. It is the duty of the husband to prepare food and make other usual acknowledgments in return for such assistance.

In reference to the discontinued use of turmeric, there is an impression that it is forbidden by the *lotu*. I have never heard either a Protestant Missionary or a Roman Catholic Priest admit that it is forbidden; but I have heard some native teachers say that it is a *vakatevoro* custom. Of course, I cannot technically describe its beneficial effects. The native idea is that it is warming and stimulating, and I can bear testimony to its reviving properties when used upon young children in conjunction with oil. In some cases of suspended animation, I have seen an almost magic revival on the body being rubbed with oil and turmeric. I do not think I ever heard a native speak otherwise than approvingly of its good effects.

Of oil, it is hardly necessary to say it is used with manifest bodily advantage by Fijians of every age or sex; by the healthy when at work or play, and by the weary, the weak and the sickly. Formerly few well-ordered houses would be found without a supply. But now it is said to be seldom found. Various causes are given, but the chief no doubt is want of thrift.

I would strongly advise that, if possible, the use of turmeric on infants be revived; and I am disposed to think that the Bulis' monthly meeting will be the best means of securing proper attention to the matters now under discussion.

The next, and probably most important matter of all is, the supply of proper and suitable food for the mother during her confinement, and the first few months of her nursing. Of course, I mean "suitable food," in contradistinction to food generally, no matter how abundant. It would be of little use enumerating any specific articles or their preparation, as it often happens that what is only used in one part of the Group may not be available in another, or may not be considered the proper thing. But there is no local ignorance on such subjects, or general instruction needed. What is wanted is, that the right thing in each and every community shall be enforced, *i.e.*, that the husband or father of the child shall be required to fulfil his responsibilities, and *when necessary*, be *forced* to do his duty.

But there is one thing which I must generally recommend as "suitable food" for a woman nursing a child, *viz.*, *bu*, or young cocoanuts, of which she should be allowed to drink as much as she needs. I think nothing need be said upon the nutritious and refreshing nature of *bu*, either as a food or as a drink. It is considered by the people the most suitable of all foods, either alone, or as a *coi* for other food for a woman nursing an infant, or for weaning a child.

It is often stated that, though nuts are *tabu*, the aged, weakly, and sick may still drink *bu*. This is the theory, but in practice it is not so. A woman asking often for *bu* would be told, perhaps by her husband or some one else of the household, "How am I to buy our sulus, or knives, &c., &c., or pay my tax if you drink *bu*?" Or, perhaps, a messenger would be sent by the head of the *matagali* or chief of the town to say, "This house is drinking *bu* too frequently."

I would recommend that it be fixed by Regulation—

- (a) That no *tabu* of cocoanuts shall be for a longer period than three months at one time, unless the special permission of the Governor is first obtained thereto;
- (b) That no person using old nuts for domestic purposes and not for sale, after a *tabu* of three months be liable for a breach of the *tabu*;
- (c) That no *tabu* of nuts apply to what may be necessary, whether old nuts or *bu*, for a woman nursing a child, for a weaning-child, or for an aged or sick person;
- (d) That the *tabu* of cocoanuts never exceed six months during one year in the aggregate, unless the special permission of the Governor is obtained thereto.

The *tabu* of nuts for such long periods as obtain in some provinces, is, I believe, the source of serious evils. In this province and the provinces of Macuata, Cakaudrove, Lau, Lomaiviti, and probably Kadavu, there is, if the Buli exercises reasonable vigilance and activity during the proper season, really no need for a *tabu* at all, further than a prohibition against selling until the tax is paid.

The chiefs and *matanivanuas* often say that, if nuts were not periodically *tabu*, the lazy and improvident would live upon old nuts and cease to plant. The due enforcement of the Planting Regulation would be a sufficient remedy and natural check.

I have little doubt that the favourable position held by Yasawa, as compared with other provinces, arises chiefly from the following causes:—

The *tabu* of nuts there is never so strict as elsewhere, and is only allowed by the consent of the community; and no chief of Yasawa to-day has sufficient power, either hereditary or from prestige, to enforce any order without the approval of the majority of his people.

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The old custom of discussing every measure in their *vakavanua* meetings is still intact, and the whole community must hear, discuss, and decide not only what has to be done, but how it is to be done—always with due regard to their ways, means, and conveniences. While the Yasawa chief always addresses the people in the mildest manner, saying, “Now my friends” or “children,” and always using the inclusive form of the plural of the first personal pronoun. Thus there is seldom any disagreement or irritation. Certainly, much less than in most parts of the Colony. And I believe they pay up their tax, have a good supply of food, live in peace, and are probably increasing. Yet it is pretty certain that the only differences existing between them and their fellows throughout Fiji, are those I have pointed out above. And yet their infant death-rate, 38·97, must be considered as very high.

I am not quite sure if there are not already Regulations upon two subjects which must be noticed, viz. :—(a) Women carrying burdens; and (b) Women getting shell-fish from the bottom of rivers. There are times when such practices can only be distressing and injurious to married women and to their offspring.

The latter practice is common in all towns on the banks of large tidal rivers. In all weathers, under a scorching sun, or in a pouring rain, women will stay in the water for three or four hours; and they may be seen coming out with their skin bleached a livid hue. They then go home, have to light the fire, boil the pot, and not infrequently have to go and gather firewood, all wet and shivering as they are.

The women frequently carry loads of firewood one or two miles (and in some places probably more) twice or thrice a week. It is almost incredible the weight some women will carry, wet or fair, not always over the best of roads. For example, women from some inland towns here will carry loads of yams from 80 to 90 lbs., six or eight miles to the coast, and have to climb and descend again a range over 700 feet high. Any remonstrance is generally met with a laugh or with such a remark as “My mother did so,” i.e., carried such burdens, “and why should not I?” There is great difficulty in even moderating such practices; but so far as young married women are concerned they ought to be positively prohibited.

I have made no reference to diseases common to Fijians. Such a subject is no doubt better left to more skilful hands. But there is one which more particularly concerns children, and probably adds to some extent to their high mortality, that is—*coko*.

I do not know to what extent *coko* figures in the death-rate of children, but from a superficial observation it has appeared to me, that deaths from *coko* are much more frequent than formerly; and this is borne out to some extent by what I hear from the people themselves.

Of course, as is well known, there is a good deal of superstition about the disease and its treatment, and it is considered a test of constitutional strength and vitality. But there can be no doubt that formerly but very few children died from *coko*, and the greatest care and labour was taken in the different stages of the disease, which I must say, except in a few cases, perhaps chief's children and a few others, one seldom sees or hears of now. And it is said that more die of it than recover, which clearly ought not to be, as it is well understood and classed amongst what they consider curable diseases.

I would suggest that it be made a special duty of the Turaga ni koro to see that the children with *coko* are being properly attended to.

There can be little doubt, and one is forced to the conclusion, both from observation and a great amount of evidence everywhere forthcoming, that the excessive mortality amongst children is mainly due to gross carelessness, and often wilful and culpable neglect on the part of father or mother, or both, and of those whose duty it is to care for and succour young children. This does not arise from ignorance of duty, or of what is requisite to be done, but from the, what I would call, “care nothing” spirit of the age. One hears every day such expressions as, *O, veitalia* (never mind), *ko cei e tagi kina* (who cares), *e na yacova na mataka li* (it will last till to-morrow), applied to every subject, grave or gay, and taken and acted upon as a motive, justification, or excuse for any neglect of duty or wrongdoing.

I would recommend that the death of every child under three years of age (and over that age if there be grounds for suspicion of neglect), be inquired into before burial, by a board to consist of the Buli, a *matanivanua*, the head teacher of the district or section, the chief of the town, and the teacher of the town where the child died or belonged to; and, where practicable, the native medical practitioner should be summoned to attend, and be required to examine the body. After the inquiry, the Buli to order the burial.

In each case the Board to report the result of the inquiry to the Roko Tui of the province; and wherever neglect has been shown and proved, whether on the part of the parents or of any other persons responsible for the care of the child, the Roko Tui should direct the guilty parties to be brought before the next District Court to be dealt with. Or, if there be no legal difficulties in the way, I believe it would be best that the board recommend some punishment or fine to be confirmed by the Roko Tui.

I am fully convinced, that if something of this kind be adopted and promptly carried out, the deaths of children from carelessness or from wilful neglect of either mother or child, will very soon decrease and a great change for the better take the place of the present very sad state of things.

Amongst the good effects most likely to follow would be that public notoriety would attach to the culpable parties; that the Bulis and chiefs of towns would be stirred up in their duties, so as to see that children and their mothers were properly attended to and cared for by those responsible.

PART III.

So far I have only considered the subject in its corporeal and tangible aspect. But it has another, which I fear, is neither insignificant nor subordinate, so far as cause and effect are concerned.

In the mental and moral phase of the subject lies, I believe, the crux of the whole problem. And, notwithstanding the real difficulties that surround it, to leave it unrecognised would be to stop at least halfway. I believe this view of the subject will explain the almost endless paradox met with in the course of observation and inquiry.

In following up a case or number of cases, certain conclusions appear to be the natural outcome. But often when it begins to seem possible to generalise, another set of facts presents itself, and a theory which appeared practical has to be abandoned. It seems almost impossible to apply a general rule to any one village or tribe. Apparently individual cases must be dealt with separately, and, if probed deep enough, it will be found that the whims, dispositions, and superstitions of the persons concerned are the root of the evil and the cause of the perplexing diversity.

The wider the range, and the more minutely the inquiry is pushed, the deeper seems the mystery. But when the problem is broached on its mental and moral side, the mystery begins to disappear, and a solution seems within reach. It is often said (and not without some colour of truth), that if a native makes up his mind to die—die he assuredly will. And from observation, and with some knowledge of the habits and customs, as well as of the disposition of the people, I feel forced to this conclusion (however unscientific or unphilosophical it may be deemed), that, if they would, they could rear their children; and that the true answer to the question, "What are the causes of this excessive infant mortality?" is—"The mothers"; and that to the question, "What is the remedy?" the answer is given—"The mothers."

The mothers are the only practical remedy. Get the mothers on the side of saving the innocents, and you will succeed in soon changing the present decrease of population into an increase. I believe if this statement were submitted to a plebiscite of the people it would be confirmed.

But, of course, a third question naturally arises,—How are the mothers to be brought over to a desire to save and rear their children?

No doubt it would be very simple to punish a woman for carelessness or for culpable neglect that has led to or hastened the death of her child. But I fear it would be no remedy, and but a very slight deterrent. And it might lead to the adoption of subterfuges, or infanticide in other forms less easily detected or dealt with. I have but little faith in attempting to coerce or force a mother to perform her natural and reasonable duties to her offspring while her will and disposition is averse thereto.

The real question is, Can she be persuaded or won over to care for her child, to do her best to rear it, and not to expect its death? As regards her moral sense of responsibility, if she were told that she had killed her child by her gross and culpable carelessness, and that, therefore, she was a manslayer or murderess, no one could be more surprised than she would probably be. In some cases she would defend herself against such an accusation; in the majority of cases she would not regard the charge seriously.

In this neighbourhood there are not less than ten women who have lost from two to seven or eight children each. I have on various occasions spoken with one or other of them respecting the deaths of their children, but have utterly failed to produce anything like a serious impression or to make them feel their personal responsibility, or to draw from them any expression of regret for their dead children. And yet I have no reason to believe that any of them are less naturally affectionate to their children when living, than the ordinary run of Fijian women.

I think it must be admitted by the more observant at least, that though the Fiji women have derived great and very decided benefits from the introduction of Christianity, they have, nevertheless, not practically benefitted to the same extent as the male portion of the race.

The woman is still the drudge, the burden carrier, and in not a few parts of the Group, nothing behind her lord and master as a food provider. The supply of most household and domestic wants devolves upon her; and a well-provided and well-kept house is far oftener the result of her industry than of her husband, or the male head of the family.

On the other hand, she is still the repository of legendary lore, and of all that is superstitious. She is the oracle of omens and mystic signs, and the authority on pedigree and hereditary rights. She is the medium and perpetuator of *mataqali* family wrongs, prejudices, and blood-feuds, a never-tiring scatterer of discord and scandal, a consummate dissembler, and ever ready with a saying or proverb to cover or palliate wrongdoing, especially when her own kith and kin are concerned.

I have not any prejudice against the Fijian woman. On the contrary I have a high opinion of her capabilities, and of her power for good within her own sphere and race. It is only necessary to look at the character and lives of the great majority of the wives of native ministers and mission teachers to see illustrated her capability and power for good. Give the majority the same education and culture, and they will soon be what a very small minority are now.

When I speak of education and culture, it is in their broadest sense. Through the Wesleyan Mission the majority of the women can read. Many can write and know as much of arithmetic, &c., as they are likely to need. All honour also to the devotion of the sisters, who, in different centres, under the Roman Catholic Mission, are labouring to instruct the Fijian girls under their charge. But I am afraid very little of this education is carried into womanhood and home life. Experience unfortunately very fully shows that what is wanted is something that will improve and benefit wives and mothers of the race in their practical daily life. For whatever be the Fijian woman's educational attainments she must make and mend her net and catch fish, gather firewood and boil the pot, gather and prepare the material with which to plait the mats upon which she and her family have to sit or lie; and perform a score of other duties that devolve upon her from which she has no escape, and but little rest or respite.

I believe if the sisters were to move about from village to village, in and out amongst the women in their daily occupations, seeing, hearing, instructing, helping, aiding, in sympathy at least, and pointing out a better way, a higher motive, and a purer spirit, more would be accomplished in the practical elevation of their sex in one year than will be done in ten years in the schoolroom.

Thinking of the vast amount of good the noble women of England, and America, and elsewhere are doing in China under the auspices of the C. I. M., I cannot refrain from expressing a regret that the authorities of the Wesleyan Mission could not see their way clear to allow, at least, some of those young women to come, who volunteered in the Australian Colonies for mission work in these islands. It would be difficult to estimate the influence for good (if only in seconding the labours and example of the

the village teacher and his wife), of say six or eight earnest enthusiastic and truly devoted young women going about from village to village. The practical effect, I feel sure, would soon be as marked as the marvellous results of the labours of the early missionaries. And there can be little doubt that soon some of the superior and more intelligent Fijian women would be impressed by such self-sacrificing examples, and becoming helpers, would vastly extend the usefulness and secure the permanence of the work. If the scheme was rejected for financial reasons, surely it was short-sighted. With such a band of earnest workers scattered through the Group, mission contributions would soon have more than doubled. If the contributions of women, and contributions due to the influence exercised by women over fathers and husbands were taken away, the mission revenue would soon dwindle to a very low figure.

While it is quite true that the Fijian woman occupies a very subordinate position, yet it would be a very great mistake to suppose she is without power to influence for good or evil even the lords of creation. Instances of this influence are constantly occurring, not simply in domestic concerns, but in communal and more public matters.

A very striking instance of this occurred here during last wet season. In the early part of 1891 sickness was prevalent to a great extent in the different towns of this province, and especially in the town of Bua, which is built upon a flat, with no natural drainage. Things were in a very bad state. The houses were in a wretched condition. Many of them were not fit for human habitation, and most were surrounded by pools of stagnant, stinking water. Our missionary's wife, however, went about like a good Samaritan, in a quiet unostentatious way, trying to administer relief and medical comforts to the sick and dying. In some instances she was only able to get into the house with the greatest difficulty, or by wading through pools of filth and mud in front of the doors of the houses in which the sick lay. One day, before I knew anything of the foregoing, a number of Bua women had been getting firewood and were resting with their loads under some orange trees near where I was working. I soon noticed a more than usually animated discussion, and giving attention to their conversation, I was able to pick up the above facts as the subject of their discussion. After some time an elderly woman, a widow and leader amongst them called for attention, and all gave heed to what she said, which was something as follows:—"Whatever may be the minds of the men about doing this work, to my mind one thing is quite clear. We cannot allow the lady from the Mission House to wade through mire and dirt into our filthy houses. I am already too much ashamed to desire to see the lady's face again. It is my mind that we either ask her not to come to the town again, or the new houses must be built." Then the whole chorus exclaimed, "That is true, the houses must be built, the houses must be built!" The leader said again, "Is that our mind, all of us? Let it be so." And gathering up their burden they trudged on to the town.

On the third day after this incident, the whole bush was alive with the sound of the axe and falling trees, and gangs of men were seen carrying timber and other house-building materials, wet and dirty though the roads were. And this continued for about six weeks till nearly every habitation in the town had been rebuilt or repaired, and the whole community was well and comfortably housed.

I say nothing about the process by which it was accomplished, because I do not know. Neither do I attribute it solely to the influence of the women. But I do know that the Roko and Buli had talked and ordered in vain. For quite twelve months the building question had been to the fore, but it had been put off for some excuse or another—such as the planting season, the tax, the mission collection, and lastly, till after the wet season should be past. And yet in the middle of the wet season, the women having come to a decision the houses were built, and well built.

Numerous other incidents could be cited indicating the power women are able to exercise within their own sphere, and in the community; and also showing how impressible they are to the best influences from either example or good teaching.

It may, perhaps, be said with some force, "Whence then the difficulty?" The question is by no means easily answered. The fact remains that children die through carelessness and neglect. One source of the evil is probably the hereditarily low moral standard one sees so markedly revealed in the daily life of the Fijian women.

The Fijian girl may leave school, good, virtuous, and intelligent, able to read and write, and mistress of the first three or four simple rules of arithmetic. And if she has lived near a missionary's family, or attended a convent school, she knows well the use of her needle. She is soon married, and has, in the discharge of her duties, to take her place amongst her fellow-women in town or tribe. Should she be a less expert fisher, net-maker, or mat-plaiter, or less diligent as a food-provider for her household than others; or if she manifest "ways of her own," no matter how right and proper they may be; she becomes at once a butt for their jibes and cutting sarcasms, and their unsympathetic and often lewd sayings. She will be asked, "Who was your mother? Was she not one of us?" Nothing that reflects upon her or her ancestry is ever forgotten. If she has shown weakness in any particular direction, the sore is kept open.

The usual result is, unless she be of some rank or of more than usually strong character, that she gradually becomes one with the rest of the women, and finally drops into the ways and doings of her elders, which her weaker sisters, following example, did from the first.

Before she is out of her teens, probably, she becomes a mother; and should she show any disposition to keep within doors too long—*i.e.*, what the other women (some of whom would probably be fishing or carrying wood within three days) think too long—she again becomes the subject of their derisive remarks, until she again takes her place among them in their fishing, wood-carrying, and other expeditions. In a great majority of cases, unless there is a *buinigone* in the house, in a few months the child sickens and dies, the mother manifesting little regret, and not infrequently feeling a sense of relief when the grave has closed over her dead child. From my own observation over 50 per cent. of first children die, and almost as many of second and third.

The question naturally arises whether this was always so; and, if not, what is the cause of the change? One often hears the more intelligent of the people themselves say that, now club law has passed away, the fear it engendered has been supplanted by indifference and levity, in which all sense of personal responsibility has been lost. And I think there is little room for doubt that the feeling of security from violence, as well as from war, and the immunity from many ills inherent in the very conditions and circumstances of the people prior to the establishment of settled government (all accomplished without any effort of their own, individually or collectively), has tended to foster indifference, and an already natural improvidence.

In the presence of the Christian teacher in almost every village throughout the Colony lies the chief hope that the remedy—namely, a higher moral tone and a deeper motive to right in all relations of daily life—may soon prevail. In fact it is, I firmly believe, practically the only hope, and is worthy of all support. The teachers' influence for good and right living, seconded by an increasing number of the more intelligent and truly Christian chiefs and official class amongst the people, is a leaven which must permeate the whole Colony, working against the many influences for evil and wrongdoing that now so deplorably prevail, and bringing about that better moral tone upon which the wellbeing and permanence of the race mainly depends.

I would make one more suggestion. That is that, as far as possible, greater recognition should be given to the monthly town and bulship *sogoni*. They are about the only form of *vakavanua* meetings left to the people; and are gatherings in which the direct voice of the people is heard, and through which orders and regulations, &c., to be effective and successful, must reach them. Direct orders from a magistrate or officer do little less than disturb and irritate. Whereas, if the same come through their natural and time-immemorial channel, they will be better understood and adapted to their abilities and their other occupations, and in the majority of cases will succeed much more satisfactorily in the long run.

Again, if anything is to be done effectively in the way of influencing wives and mothers to throw off the careless and indifferent spirit of the age, and strive to rear their offspring, it is through these gatherings they will easiest be reached.

In conclusion, I only wish I could have dealt more exhaustively with the subject. And yet I fear the length of this paper, and that it may not be of as much assistance as a more concise and better arranged statement would be, if I had the time or ability for it. I hope His Excellency will accept my apologies both for the delay and the many faults that are only too apparent. Having a conscientious regard to the importance of the subject, I have feared to curtail more. Of cases and incidents illustrative of the different phases of the subject numbers more might have been given. I have chosen what appeared the most typical.

I have written in the interests of the people as a whole, and, as far as possible, from their standpoint; *i.e.*, from facts of frequent or almost daily occurrence, the truth of which may be found out by any one who has the time and inclination to observe their daily habits and doings.

I am quite aware that it may be said I have kept too close to the native view of themselves and their present conditions and prospects. But, if so, I have done it because of a settled conviction, as I have already said, that if the race is to be saved it must be by themselves. Why should I seek to impose views and theories of my own when the very existence of a race is at stake? Surely there has been enough experimenting already with other races with which we have come in contact throughout the world. How very little effect for good has resulted from his intercourse with whites, whether official or otherwise, in the inner life, modes of thought, and daily life of the Fijian. How little have attempted innovations done to elevate either the individual or the community when they have not sprung from the people themselves or been assimilated into their habits and ways of living. And, further, I doubt not that an all-wise and all-providing beneficent Providence is watching over the best interests and welfare of the Fijian race. This greatly increases my confidence that His Excellency will have wisdom, and be supported by best counsels, in carrying out those measures best calculated to secure the wellbeing and permanence of the race.

I have, &c.,
D. WILKINSON.

No. 60.

James Byrne, Esq., Storekeeper, Nasigatoka, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Nasigatoka, 7 April, 1892.

After having read the Circular regarding the Decrease of Population of Fiji and the statistics therein published, I must conclude they are likely to be more correct than any that I could give, never having taken any notes nor made any observations with a view to their being used; so I can only give mine for what they are worth. I can only, by recalling events and impressions of the last thirty years, come to the conclusion that there are a combination of new causes at work replacing the old ones, such as massacres, war, &c.

The new causes I conceive to be the number of epidemics that occur about every year—such as dengue, whooping-cough, influenza, and others (I do not know what designation to give them), which cause more or less mortality, especially amongst children. I am also of opinion that the measles left a great many of the older people with impaired constitutions, leaving them more susceptible to disorders than they otherwise would have been. There is one complaint that seems to be a great cause of mortality amongst nursing-children. Though not a new one, I think it has increased of late years. It is called by the natives *dabe*, and is supposed to be caused by the men cohabiting with their wives while nursing. Whether that is the real cause seems to me to be open to investigation, although they seem to trace cause and effect with apparent certainty, and also recognise the symptoms when they occur.

To

To take another view of the matter,—native women living with and having children by white men, the children do not seem to be affected with the disorder, although not using any preventative means. I am inclined to the opinion that the mother's imagination has something to do with it, as I do not hear of it occurring amongst natives of other islands; and on Fiji women the impression regarding it has almost been born into them. I might say also another cause which, I think, has been on the increase is the practice of using leaves or other means to prevent conception. There seems to me to be a great number of women who should be mothers, who go on year after year without having a child, which I can only attribute to this cause noted above; and there is another I have noticed,—the natives do not lead as regular lives as formerly. Young men and women, and even children, indulge greatly in *yagona*, and have whole nights of dissipation. It seems to be only a matter of the quantity of *yagona* available now. In old times it was only the old men who indulged in drinking *yagona*, and only to a moderate extent. I cannot help being of the opinion that it has an injurious effect, and especially when carried on in the dwelling-houses where, perhaps, women are nursing young children amongst the noise and confusion consequent on these orgies.

I think there are as many children born as formerly, if not more, but not so many live to grow up. So hoping this may throw some light on the matter, however small.

I have, &c.,
JAMES BYRNE.

No. 61.

The Honourable Bolton Glanvill Corney, Esq., M.R.C.S., E., Chief Medical Officer,
to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Suva, 31 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receiving a copy of your Circular Letter, No. $\frac{282}{1892}$, dated the 30th December last, calling attention to the numerical Decline in the Native Population of these Islands; especially with regard to the high rate of mortality among infants.

2. The fact that it has been deemed needful to submit the interrogatories thus set in motion by the Governor, affords in itself an indication that the key to the matter is not to be found in any single circumstance or group of circumstances, but that the whole subject of racial habits, domestic, moral, social, and political, and of the physical constitution and tendencies of the people both before and after "civilising" influences began to be brought to bear upon them, is more or less involved in producing the results now observable; and requires, if any satisfactory explanation is to be come to, to be sifted *ab ovo usque ad mala*.

My remarks must, therefore, not be taken as representing any hard and fast dogmas or theories, but rather as throwing out rambling thoughts and mere suggestions, expressed with a view to their being considered side by side with those offered by other observers.

3. His Excellency condenses the secondary details of the subject into one principal statement, averring that the decrease of the native population is due to the phenomenal rate of mortality among infants; and your letter formulates from this postulate two chief questions, namely:—

- (i.) What are the predisposing causes of this mortality? and
- (ii.) What remedies are practicable?

To the former of these questions replies need not lack variety; but during a residence of fifteen years in this Colony, coming during the most of the time a good deal in contact with the native race in its inner and domestic life, I have not been able to fix upon any one or two predisposing causes as being distinctly paramount to the rest. The remedies are less easy of evolution.

4. The method I have adopted to arrive at a just understanding of these causes, as far as possible, has been chiefly as follows:—

Section i.—To ascertain in the first instance what are the proximate causes of death in the people, especially the young children.

Section ii.—To consider what are the conditions ordinarily known to operate in predisposing to the development of such causes.

Section iii.—To decide whether such conditions exist in this country and people; and whether if they do, our observations justify us in attributing the proximate causes of death, and the excess of mortality over births, to their operation.

Section iv.—Next to ascertain whether there are any conditions obtaining amongst the Fijians which are not usually met with elsewhere, but which may be safely credited as tending to the same result.

Section v.—Then, to compare the present day life of the Fijian man, woman, and child, and the health risks to which they are exposed, with the life which we believe them to have ordinarily led before their contact with white men.

Section vi.—And lastly, to consider the state of the birth-rate among the Fijians, the influences by which it is governed, and its bearing upon the mortality.

QUESTION I.

What are the predisposing causes of excessive mortality amongst infants?

5. Under *section i.*—To ascertain the proximate causes.

With this object in view I have devoted several opportunities during the last three years to making myself acquainted with the Provincial Death Registers. My inspections showed that diseases attributable to disorder of the abdominal viscera are more frequently answerable for the deaths of infants

infants than are other causes; a condition which is equally true, however, in the case of adults. Such diseases have been usually registered under the general term *mate kete*, a term which can only be described as loose and indefinite. It appears pretty certain, however, and more especially so in the case of infants and children, that it represents fairly what we should describe as diseases of the digestive system; and these include according to official nosology* those affecting the lips, mouth, jaws, teeth, tongue, palate and fauces, salivary glands, pharynx and œsophagus, stomach, intestines, rectum and anus, liver, hepatic ducts and gall-bladder, pancreas, peritoneum, and abdominal lymphatic system.

6. Fatal diseases of other parts of the abdominal contents—such as the urinary apparatus, spleen, organs of reproduction, blood-vessels and nerves, are sufficiently rare in children not to need inclusion; but there is one general (and contagious) disease common to almost every Fijian child which claims particular notice, namely, “yaws,” and is a fruitful cause of debility, damaged constitution, and premature death, which as often as not is finally brought about by diarrhœa or dysentery supervening.

The fatal causes of yaws are generally registered in the Provincial Registers by the names *Coko ca*, *Drĩnu* (Ba, Nadroga, Ra), *Sona* (Yasawa, Mucnata), *Tona* (Lau), and are chiefly due to dirtiness of the body and surroundings, improper diet, insufficient or injudicious treatment, including meddlesome medical treatment, and general neglect through the ignorance of parents.

Yaws is a preventible disease, being communicated only by contagion, in the sense of inoculation; and it might be starved out of the Colony in about ten years if the people could be educated up to a sense of cleanliness, such as the better classes of Europeans enjoy. As it is, however, Fijian parents look upon *coko* much in the same light as our mothers regard teething. They think of it as expressive of a natural phase of childhood through which nearly all must pass; and as something hardly to be classed as a disease, unless it happens to run an unusual or exceptionally severe course, or to recede, as they say, prematurely. To eradicate these ideas from the minds of Fijian mothers, present and future, would, I fear, occupy a much longer period than would be necessary, if they did not so exist, to eradicate the disease itself from the whole race.

But I am satisfied that yaws exercises a powerful and damaging influence upon the vitality of the children, and in many cases wrecks the constitutions of those who survive the primary *coko*, and who struggle on only to die of secondary or intercurrent diseases afterwards, which, but for its occurrence, they would have escaped altogether.

So serious an influence do I regard the general prevalence of yaws among the Fijian child population to be, that I should have no hesitation in ascribing the change from a stationary to a steadily downward numerical tendency in the race to its effects, if it could be shown that this disease was only introduced to the islands within the last dozen or score of decades. There is, however, no evidence that its origin in Fiji was so recent, while the records† of it in Tonga and a few other looser but earlier allusions to its prevalence in Tahiti and elsewhere‡ invite us to infer that it had even then been long ingrained throughout a major section of the races in these seas.

7. The accidents of child-birth, developmental diseases, dysentery, and intestinal worms must also be remembered; but if we except measles, whooping-cough, and influenza most of the specific febrile diseases, with malarial poisoning, and syphilis, may be left out of the question as rarely or never occurring in Fijian children. On the other hand, scrofula and leprosy must by no means be overlooked, and deserve consideration, especially the former, side by side with yaws.

Of pulmonary diseases—laryngitis, bronchitis, and pneumonia occur pretty frequently in children, though still oftener in the old men; and especially those of the hill districts. They are generally registered under the symptomatic term *vu*—cough; or *mate na serena* or *sarisari*—chest sickness.

Fijian children who survive their birth appear to meet but seldom with a violent death. Burns and scalds seem to be the most common causes of this class, with drowning, and not infrequently, choking—*ora*. Two cases of the latter accident have occurred within my own knowledge through the practice of biting a live fish in order to kill it. In each of these, the fish having given a sudden jerk, slipped through the child's fingers into his throat and stuck there, compressing the larynx with fatal results.

Many children are reduced to a pitiable state of debility and wretchedness by inattention to the simplest rules of cleanliness, especially in the more arid districts to leeward, both in Navitilevu and Vanua-levu. They often remain a prey to itch, ringworm, lice, ophthalmia, and ulcers for months together. It is a practice not to bathe during illness, excepting in the case of the fevers introduced by white men—such as measles, when, of course, it is most injurious. Invalids—children or adults—will remain many weeks or even months without washing or having their hair cut, and I conceive it possible, that having regard to the offensive nature of some of the abovenamed diseases, their victims not infrequently die the sooner on this account; and even that lives are let slip away by the observance of this custom which, under more wholesome treatment, might be preserved.

Fijian children rarely suffer difficulty or danger in cutting their teeth, and the natives do not as a rule recognise dentition as a cause of illness. Convulsions are not so frequent as might be expected, although the nervous system of the adult native is curious and contradictory, being decidedly insensitive and callous in some respects (as evidenced by his unfailing ability to sleep soundly, his happy-go-lucky self-satisfied mind, and his imperturbability of temper), yet by no means free from material imperfections or peculiarities. To some of these may be attributed his frequent liability to spasmodic asthma, shingles, leucoderma, epilepsy, and various interesting, but complicated phases of tarantism, frenzy, and religio-superstitious perfervidism, as well as the more definite forms of mania and dementia; and his rather ready tendency to commit suicide.

Apart from the mechanical accidents of parturition, immaturity at birth is common; and forms a fruitful source of increment to the infantile death-rate. I have reason to believe that pulmonary atelectasis is often a cause. Deficiency of breast-milk is another common circumstance to which Fijian infants are exposed, and though it by no means infrequently finds a place in the death register, it seems very

* The Nomenclature of Diseases: Royal College of Physicians, London.—2nd Edit., 1885.

† Mariner's Account of the

Natives of the Tonga Islands by Dr. Martin.—London, 1817.

‡ Cook, Bougainville, Lesson, Moerenhout, &c.

very probable that it is a much more potent and usual cause of death than is generally supposed, or allowed. It is expressed in the registers as *maca na mcna sucu* or, in certain provinces, chiefly Ra and Ba, *lodo i sucu*. There being no cow's or goat's milk or next to none, the dire effects of ill-regulated feeding-bottles have not yet been felt among the Fijians.

8. Such are for the most part the diseases and accidents which the Death Registers of the last twelve years (before which none were kept), have appeared to me to indicate as constituting the principal proximate causes of death in Fijian infants and young children.

To these must be added, however, one other, expressed by the Fijian term *ramusu*. After repeated trials I have failed to discover what are really the pathological conditions which the natives assert to be a fracture or dislocation of some of the vertebræ and call simply "broken." That Fijian children do break their backs as often as popular native opinion would have it they do, or as the registers record *ramusu*, is not to be believed. Nor is vertebral caries, although fairly common in adolescents, by any means frequent in infants. On the whole I am inclined to class most cases of *ramusu* with tabes mesenterica, but the accident of intussusception or the presence of round worms may account for some of the symptoms in others. Yet it is not unreasonable to suppose that infants as neglected as those of Fijian mothers usually are may be exposed to risks by falling or other violence which civilised children never meet, and that they really do on some occasions "break their backs."

9. So much for the proximate or direct causes of infant mortality. The question of predisposing influences is less concrete in its character and more difficult of investigation.

10. Under sections ii, iii, iv, and v.—Conditions which predispose in Fiji and elsewhere to the proximate causes enumerated in the foregoing paragraphs, and considerations affecting them with regard to the Fijians and the excess of infantile deaths.

Diseases of the Digestive System may be confidently said to be brought about in great measure by defective nutrition. This in its turn arises from the use of unsuitable food, or of food which, though originally suitable, has suffered partial decomposition, or been otherwise spoiled. With the native race the latter often occurs through insufficient, uncleanly, or ill-devised cooking.

Vegetable products—fruit and root-food, sugar-cane, &c.—are often consumed by children when immature, or in quantities which are excessive.

Bad water is another fruitful cause of bowel disorders, and is met with as a rule, rather than an exception, in the Fijian villages. Unhealthy emanations from the soil, whether due to topographical conditions and ill-chosen sites, or merely to the want of proper arrangements for the disposal of refuse and excreta, occur in the majority of native villages, especially those situated on alluvial ground or on the coast.

11. By far the most fatal diseases of the digestive system among the Fijians are dysentery and diarrhœa; and these are pre-eminently caused by bad water, bad air, bad food, or specific bacterial infection.

12. A series of walking journeys over nearly the whole of Vitilevu and portions of many other islands of the Group, involving prolonged domestic relations with the natives, has made me uncomfortably familiar with the quality of their drinking-water. There is a prevailing notion among them, arising out of superstition, that the consumption of river water, even in the hills, where it is clear and sparkling, is productive of disease. They even attribute such diseases as ringworm to its use. For this and other reasons they often prefer to drink stagnant water of really impure and dangerous qualities.

In comparatively few villages is the water-supply derived from a small stream or rill, but where it is it is usually good. A large proportion of Fijians drink from water-holes—they are not wells—which are dug for the purpose; and the condition of these is distinctly bad. They often abound in confervæ, algae, infusoria, and microzymes, and the samples I have examined have almost invariably given free indications of the presence of mud, organic matter, chlorine, and ammonia, and I have often found sulphuretted hydrogen set free or standing. In some districts water of any kind is scarce, and I have seen a town (Ovnlo, Nadi) of more than seventy inhabitants supplied by a shallow pit in which about a wash-hand-basin full of opalescent brackish stuff was the amount usually collected at the bottom. On another island I visited (Mali) there had been no fresh water at all for three months. In such places the natives resort to cocoanuts for drink, and roast their food, or boil it in sea-water.

The water in nearly all the streams round Vitilevu from Nadroga, north about, to Tova Peak on the east coast is laden with argillaceous matter, which gives it a milky appearance and renders its habitual use for drinking purposes unsafe.

The natives have little real perception in such matters, and cleanliness in the strict sense which refined Europeans attach to it is an unknown and unconceivable quantity to the average Fijian.

13. Bad air is a frequent concomitant of native life owing to close murky houses, carefully closed up in every crevice at night for the sake of warmth and to keep out mosquitoes. The villages and interiors of the commoners' dwellings are, as a rule, not clean: the former unswept (except in remote mountain towns, which excel in this respect), unscavenged except by the pigs, which substitute excrementitious for putrescent refuse, and overgrown with grass and weeds: the latter dusty, imperfectly matted, tenanted by fleas, bugs, lice and various kinds of acari, littered with food scraps, the *kosakosa* or fibrous residue of used up *yagona*; and the mats themselves and underlying grass or *sasa* smeared with expectoration, for which it is the common practice to make it a receptacle, the urine of infants, and the sanious discharges from yaws, leprosy or other sores. In the universal practice of neglecting all kinds of ulcers is probably to be found the origin of the native belief, that mats are often the medium of contagion, though the reason which exists in the natives' minds for it is a superstitious relic of their ancient cult.

Apart from domestic and avoidable causes of impure air may be mentioned miasmata. Although the islands are popularly said to be entirely free from malaria, and although it is true that paludal fevers, such as ague, remittent, and bilious fevers do not exist here, there is reason to feel assured that deleterious emanations from the soil are common; and the quality of sites—relatively low, flat and alluvial

alluvial—upon which native villages are generally placed is certainly calculated to favour any influence they may have in that wise being felt. I am much inclined to think that a good deal of the dysentery, diarrhœa, and dyspepsia, which occurs, is due, especially in children, who live with their respiratory inlet only a few inches off the ground, to such a cause; whatever may be the precise kinds of bacteria present.

14. With regard to bad food, it was recently my experience to inquire into an epidemic of dysentery in a native village situated not a hundred miles from Suva;* and there I found the children who were the subject of it, being fed by their mothers upon small oysters (*dio*) and land crabs (*tuba*). The enhibition of castor oil and a supply of tinned milk, arrowroot, and biscuit, was the treatment adopted, and the children speedily recovered. Children early acquire the habit of grubbing food for themselves, and bring in from the bush such things as grasshoppers, lizards (*moko*), mice, phalangiers, all kinds of indigestible roots, and unripe fruit; and from the beach or the reefs, shell-fish, and uncertain food products of the most varied kinds. They generally over-eat themselves when they can, a fact of which their distended stomachs give visible evidence even to the uninitiated; and their meals are taken without regard to time or regularity. It is in fact either a feast or a famine with them; and this is generally the case even with the adult native as well.

In their earliest months children are often fed by mothers upon food which they cannot digest. Breast-milk is in numerous cases deficient in amount, and in a race so deeply affected by struma its quality must be to a very serious extent tainted by the bodily state of the mother—especially in the provinces where Tongan blood predominates.

When breast-milk is deficient chewed *dalo* and boiled *dalo* stalks generally take the place of it; but in places where cocoanuts are plentiful, especially the smaller islands and sub-groups, a superior article is made by scraping or pulping this nut and expressing its juice mixed with water. From this the children derive a supply of hydro-carbon material which their more regular diet of *dalo* or yams does not afford.

15. The only other specific disease to which I would allude is helminthiasis—the presence of worms; usually in the intestine. I have met with numerous instances of this, and the fact of their existence is well known to the natives themselves. It is probably often fatal, though not separately registered, being no doubt included under *mate kete*. I cannot refrain from quoting a portion of an original letter I lately received from an old settler in Fiji, who has travelled all over the Group and has seen and lived the interior life of the people. It was written on the advent of epidemic influenza last year:—

At the time of the measles, I saw the dreadful sight so often of the long round worm quitting the corpse at the nose, mouth, and anus, that I then first became convinced of the enormous prevalence of worms in the Fijians; and in innumerable cases of *cokadra*† I have found a worm powder all that was wanted, and I believe hundreds have died of worms who were supposed to have died of dysentery. I once gave over eighty worm powders during the measles in the town of Cuvu, and almost without exception worms were voided. I gave these powders all in the evening, after I had seen nine dead men in one house that morning covered with worms crawling from them, and the floor covered with them—a horrible sight.

16. With regard to epidemics there is no doubt that measles in 1875, completely changed the face of the population. It is generally admitted that about 40,000 deaths took place from that cause, out of a population which, if that figure was correct, is now known to have been 150,000.

In 1883–4 about 3,000 deaths have been attributed to whooping-cough; but none are so registered. Probably the disease being a novel one to the natives, they failed to define it in reporting deaths, for want of a specific name. Last year whooping-cough recurred, but the deaths from it seem to have been few, except in Vanualevu, where they gave cause for alarm.

The effects of epidemic influenza are scarcely yet known.

In 1885 Dengue spread to the Colony, but no deaths were registered from it nor under any name indicating it.

In the same year Epidemic Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis attacked a section of the immigrant population, but spared the Fijians.

And in that year ordinary (catarrhal) Influenza also prevailed, as it usually does once or twice almost every year.

Phagedænic dysentery (*kalou ni wai*) has at times occurred in circumscribed epidemics; especially attacking children, and has proved very fatal. The early part of 1891 saw several such minor outbreaks.

17. Diseases of the respiratory system have been included in my list of infantile death causes. They do not need special description; but it may be well to add a word with regard to nocturnal *mekes*. Much has been written and said of them already. In many respects they are calculated to promote illnesses, but they do not affect infants or very young children. They interfere with sleep, they generally mean excessive or ill-regulated feasting, they induce over-fatigue, and they expose to chill. The old-fashioned immodest element being eliminated from them and license being no longer allowable, these dances lack some of the attributes which formerly kept the excitement at its highest pitch. For this reason the onlookers are probably more prone to receive a chill and develop pneumonia, pleurisy, bronchitis, or a feverish attack, than was the case when their interest was more stimulated and lasting.

18. These and a hundred other minutiae in the domestic life and surroundings of the child combine to influence its vital strength for evil or for good.

They may be conveniently condensed into the one term Defective Sanitation. The remedies for defective sanitation are well known and need not be detailed in this paper. In the matter now in hand the difficulty lies in applying them. The Government has not been passive. It has been the constant care of Governor after Governor, of each Colonial Secretary, of the Natives' Department, the Native Regulation Board, the Medical Department, and the Magistrates, to instil into the minds of chiefs, to recapitulate at Provincial Councils, and to enforce by legislation and regulation, simple and proper sanitary measures; and evidences of their observance in places is not wanting. But in walking about the country, staying in native villages, and mixing with the people, it has seemed to me that much assistance

of

* Suva Vou.

† Literally, "bloody flux."

of the most valuable kind might be given, if a body of sanitary missionaries could be organised and implanted amongst the Fijians. Preferably these should be ladies, inasmuch as the beginnings would best be made amongst the native mothers and children. Something in the nature of "zenana" work might be managed; and would I feel sure be productive of much solid good. Such a system would begin by affording sound nutriment to the roots of this metaphorical tree of evil, instead of trying to reform it—as is often unavoidably the position of sanitary legislation—by applying a blister to the leaves. Unfeeling though the Fijian male adult appears to strangers, he would, I am strongly inclined to believe, look favourably and earnestly towards any well-conceived design having for its object the advancement and preservation of his women and his children.

19. The Fijian woman, moreover, is really the person most in need of improvement. It is the woman who has the most inducements, and who by neglect or by design is the most able to curtail her own fecundity. The girls and younger women are, by nature, unthinking; they are also perverse, selfish, and headstrong to a degree. They can no longer be flogged or eaten, they must therefore be educated.

It is the woman upon whom devolves the care and nursing of the children when born, especially during the critical period of infancy, to which the subject of this inquiry most nearly relates.

It is the woman also upon whom is cast the burden and brunt of the domestic labour—so much in need of a division—as well as an unfair share of the planting and garnering of such ponderous produce as yams, *dalo*, and *kawai*, the collection and portage of firewood, and the strain and exposure of fishing.

20. The man on the other hand, is nowadays relieved of much of the work that in olden times made it a necessity that the women should help beyond their fair share in the drudgery and the heavy labour. The man no longer has to fight or to watch, or to entrench and fortify his villages, or to make weapons, or to carry messages at the bidding of every whim of his chief. He is relieved from these exciting, though laborious occupations by the establishment of peace and by the allotment of definite officials in each village. He is in fact relieved, not only from much of the labour, but also from the mental activity and excitement which formerly kept him up; and he is in danger of lapsing into a state of bodily contentment and intellectual lethargy which can hardly be considered conducive to the maintenance of a good physical standard.

Life under the conditions of a perennial state of siege, and the constant possibility of open war breaking out which was always latent, sharpened their wits and exercised their bodies; but now that they are secure they become listless and insensitive, doing as little as possible for themselves individually, but trusting everything to the commune; and are learning to substitute a mere vague sort of awe for the ancient direct bodily fear, by means of which their chiefs then governed them.

21. The influence of the chiefs was paramount. Disobedience was punishable by death. They directed and controlled everything, and in them was treasured up the hereditary "savoir faire," the possession of which was so necessary a condition for conducting the business of a tribe or state constituted as the communes of the old Fijians were.

Now, everything is left to a *bose*. The *bose* is a function which means delay, means a division of responsibility, means a temporary though mild excitement—a social gathering in fact—and means pork. But it also means to some extent a paring down of the prerogatives of the chiefs; it tends to limit their actions and their ordinances, and to curtail their ancient power. Unfortunately they are not, as a rule, men of sufficient probity or patriotism to sacrifice their minor pleasures to the extent of rendering themselves dependable as governing units; and the system of *boses* is probably the best and only one practicable in the present stage of the Colony, and the only one compatible with the communal system. Yet, in my humble opinion, they are too much subdivided, and too numerous.

22. It is just this transition from the rule of the club to the moral sway of order and government which presents a most difficult, not to say critical, phase in the existence of the nation. The intense conservatism of the old Fijian is all but incompatible with the free-minded policy of nineteenth century Europeans, even under its most moderate aspects; and, until the commoners are educated, or the policy "slowed down," this is likely to continue so. Education must begin in the homes of the people, and it must occupy a good many generations to achieve it. Slowing down the policy would mean retrogression, and would, whether or no, be difficult to effect in the presence of an European population in intimate relation with the natives. But the policy has been too sudden in its inception to be also safe.

23. Fijians take their personal pleasures unbridled by reasoning or by the teachings of experience. They set at naught the cautions exhibited before them by instances of disease or misfortune, and take no thought for the morrow. To us their recreations may appear immoderate; but, if we consider what would be our own inclinations and what the extent to which we should probably indulge them if we were uncontrolled by any need to make provision for our old age or for our families, it will seem probable to most of us that we should not be more disposed to exercise self-denial in our pleasures or in our idlings than the communist, but untutored, Fijian is, and that our conduct would be swayed in but very small degree by what we moderns are pleased to call the decorum of social life.

Consider with this the ethical beliefs in which the native has been brought up, so widely differing from those which regulate our own conduct—his inability to conceive what we understand by honour; his moral code regarding property rights; his land tenure; his communal obligations and rights; his marital relations; his polygamous instinct; his all-pervading superstition; his undervaluing of other peoples' lives and cares; and his unfeeling cruelty towards animals—and there remains little room for wonder that the civilising efforts of white men during a brief fifty years have not yet arrested the downward tendency of the vital standard of the race.

24. The influence of Christian teaching and European civilisation has been very varying, and in some matters more far-reaching than was dreamt of in the philosophy of those who set themselves the task of imparting their tenets to the Fijians, both for good and ill. Who will deny, for instance, if he is at all familiar with the intricacies of the native mind, that the firm belief in witchcraft and in the ancestral spirit-world, which Fijians, in common with other Polynesian and Melanesian hybrids, possessed, and to some extent still retain, did not in heathen times conduce to—nay, ensure—the observance of

of certain salutary rules and *tabus* as regards personal and communal hygiene at least as powerfully as the Mosaic law did for the children of Israel, if not so scientifically? What native would have ventured, whether by neglect or design, to leave a single scrap of refuse food lying about—perhaps to rot unnoticed, but courting, on the other hand, the machinations of his enemy for achieving his bewitchment? What native would have dared to carelessly defile any place where his evacuations could make their presence known and traceable for fear he should suffer *draunikau* by their medium? Why were the village *rara* and precincts formerly swept scrupulously clean where now (except in parts of Colo where the *lotu* is a name but not yet a power, and is looked upon by the elders with secret distrust and open indifference) they are left to become grass-grown and weedy, offering a nidus for all sorts of culinary refuse and domestic rubbish? The superstitious fear of *draunikau* and the influence of a deeply-rooted belief in malignant spirits was at the bottom of all this, and kept the villages and outskirts in a great measure clean—far cleaner than the towns of Europe in the corresponding ages; and the vast improvement in precautionary measures for the public health which has been taking place amongst the Anglo-Saxon race during the present century may, perhaps, be described as a converse condition of the insanitary revolution occurring in Polynesia.

25. Besides bad water, improper food, and air rendered impure by remediable sanitary defects, it must also be borne in mind that a great change has taken place in the general quality of the sites of natives' villages. In former days their selection was controlled in great measure by the requirements of warfare, terrorism, and their attendant watchfulness. Personal and communal security could best and most easily be ensured by dwelling upon places well fortified by nature. Such sites were, of course, apt to be elevated and not easily accessible; but they were on that very account airy and well drained, and usually provided with a water-supply derived from small streams having a hilly and rapid course, and therefore little likely to harbour contamination.

Peace has been the means of allowing the villagers to build their houses on the low-lying flat lands. Alluvial river-banks, valleys, and deltas have been chosen as being more ready of access than the ancient fastnesses, and as being nearer to the planting grounds and rivers. In some parts it has even been found expedient to foster this tendency as a means of stamping out the old love for raiding and pillage; the people, knowing their own alluvial towns to be easily vulnerable, are afraid to lay themselves open, by attacking their neighbours, to retaliation. The Fijian is naturally a fearsome person, and lived during the *gauna makawa* in a state of perpetual dread of his neighbours—which was generally a synonymous term with enemies. At times when, in consequence of a longer peace than usual or other accidents, his own fear no longer exceeded that of his enemy, he would make a raid on the latter—provided he was also clever enough to concoct a successful plot or conspiracy beforehand to use, if necessary, as his justification or mere excuse. Now that almost every village is built on a plain or in a hollow, the sense of order and security, born of government by a foreign power, has in the early years of its existence been materially fostered, in places, by the increased dread which every man instinctively still has, more or less, of his neighbour, in consequence of all the villages being equally vulnerable.

But it is to be feared that facility of access in regard to siege or raiding is not the only kind of vulnerability these villages possess. Their sites offer, as a rule, examples of defective hygiene, and any goodness they possess is generally a comparative quality and no more. But there are exceptions, especially in Colo Navosa and on small islands; and the faults are, in most instances, governed by complications, depending upon the ownership of lands and the suzerainty of chiefs, which render any general amelioration of this defect a matter of slow progress.

26. Besides the direct effects of bad air, bad food, bad water, and epidemics, in causing infantile dysentery and other diseases of the bowels and digestive system something must be allowed for the influence of a low vital power at birth, and also of a damaged constitution resulting out of yaws. Both these factors seem to tend towards dysentery or diarrhœa as their deathward avenue; and while the latter admits of easy explanation, the former involves several abstruse questions too long and too intricate for full consideration in this paper.

The Fijian race is, however, so largely tainted with scrofula, and leprosy, that one can hardly avoid the conclusion that these diseases, especially the former, may have much to do with determining the infant puniness and mortality. The offspring of Fijian women and white men are even more subject to scrofulous ailments and disfigurations than those of wholly Fijian parents; and the scrofulous element is distinctly more noticeable in Lau, Kadavu, and other seats of Tongan immigration to Fiji, than in Colo amongst the Fijians proper. Yet the relation between scrofulous populations and the rates of decrease (or increase, as in Yasawa) does not seem constant.

27. By the terms of your circular we are allowed to assume that the diminution in the number of the people is no new thing. We see a sufficiency of causes which may account theoretically for it now, and we are met with the knowledge that one formerly considerable source of direct increment to the death-rate no longer exists, namely, anarchy with its attendant warfare, raiding and cannibalism, as well as cannibalism for its own sake, and cannibalism as an appanage of power. We are left, therefore, to compare the state of the social and domestic hygiene of the people nowadays with that of former times, and therein lies the *questio vexata* of the whole subject. It is not so much why do they die now? as, how comes it that they ever lived to increase at all and reach the zenith of their numerical strength?

28. The writings of missionary pioneers in Fiji and other places sufficiently show that missionaries, as a rule, fall into the error of applying their own moral standards by which to measure those of native races who have lived for ages under social conditions utterly different from theirs. They ignore that moral rectitude is not a fixed quantity in all people and for all time; and in trying to force upon native chiefs and native institutions the theories and forms of a foreign fetishism before the commoners have begun to relinquish their own, they imperilled both. The transmutation was too sudden; and although much of the old cult and its attendant *tabus* and superstitions has been given up, their salutary influences have not yet found a substitute in the adoption of the most practical details of the new one. The system was to supplant when it ought to have been to engraft.

The presence of runaway sailors and convicts would naturally exert evil influences and set examples of the most censurable sort; while the rivalry between white men's religious sects and the national jealousies witnessed by the natives as between the ships of foreign powers would stimulate them to retain confidence in their own opinions and practices, and to resist the allurements held out to them; and thus the critical period would become prolonged.

29. One of the most important of these practices was polygamy. Polygamy was regarded as honourable, enjoyable, profitable, convenient, and indicative of wealth and power. From the point of view of the national mortality everything was in its favour. There was, therefore, no check of a psychological character on its prolific tendency *per se*. The greater a man's rank, wealth, and power, the more readily he could obtain a choice of the best women for his hearth, as well as plenty of the best food, the best lodgement, and the best attendance, for himself and for them and for his children.

The inherited physical tendency of his offspring was, therefore, towards advantage; a tendency which is exemplified in the marked pre-excellence of physique met with in chiefly families and their descendants still surviving from the polygamous times.

A plurality of wives, moreover, allowed those who were child-bearing to devote their whole attention to that condition, and to give all their time to nourishing and tending their children, while other wives not actively engaged in procreation for the time being did the house work and food labour, planting, garnering, and fishing, plaiting, *masi* beating, and so forth.

It is a well known fact that the custom was for a mother to suckle her child for a long period—from two to three years—and that she would be allowed by her lord to remain in as favourable as possible a position for doing it. Monogamy prevents the realisation of this salutary plan, and the Fijian has no proper or even passable substitute for mother's milk.

Polygamy might be considered, however, for reasons above given, to bring about a monopoly of women in the hands of the better classes. To some extent it probably did, and thereby excluded some of the inferior males from procreating—again a salutary influence as far as the physical improvement of the race was concerned. The concomitants of polygamy in fact, in the circumstances of the ancient Fijian morale, with its social and political system in vogue, would seem to have exercised a selective control on mating, and to have tended towards the construction of a population consisting always of the survivors of the fittest and most prolific, one therefore prone to increase in numbers as well as to improve in quality.

Successful polygamy, however, presupposes a large excess of females over males to start with. At the present day we have a deficiency of females; but it is impossible to say what was the condition fifty years ago.

30. Here it may be proper to consider the possible part which consanguinity in marriage may have to answer for in the promoting the gestation of weakly offspring. It has been supposed on reasonable grounds that the constant state of inter-tribal warfare which is known to have held sway among the Fijians in Mariner's time, and during the latter part of the eighteenth century when and before Cook and d'Entrecasteau were at Tonga, did not always exist; but that cycles of peaceful life, or at any rate nothing more actively aggressive than a general, if armed, neutrality induced the growth of that extensive population in the islands of which a but slight archæological examination of the surface at the present day reveals the traces. In such times even the common people may have obtained wives from more or less distant places; whereas during the warlike ages the captives would for the most part fall to the lot of powerful chiefs and their retinue. The advent of more or less universal war would naturally give rise to license and rapine; many women would be spoiled for child-bearing and many men would turn, amid the general turmoil and the insecurity of travel, to their more immediate neighbours for wives by purchase. So in-breeding would gradually become more and more common amongst the inferior classes, and a progressive diminution of fecundity or an increasing frailty in the offspring might result.

That in-breeding has taken place to a large extent in many of the islands, districts, and villages becomes sufficiently evident on an examination of the inter-relationships of the people of almost any village or group of villages being entered upon. Perhaps the distribution of certain hereditary taints—such as struma and leprosy also indicate it.

31. Several other causes affect the fecundity of females and the vital power of their offspring; but it has been already shown* that the birth-rate is high, and the question of fecundity need, therefore, not be discussed. Women, however, are likely to bear dead or ill-developed children or sickly ones so long as they continue to set aside the Native Regulation against *dreke dreke*—carrying heavy weights of firewood, pots, yams, *dalo*, and a dozen other things, including their own babies, on their backs. So long as they go into the water and stay immersed for long periods at improper times, usually by the bidding of their husbands, to fish or to collect mussels, &c., they will damage the prospects of their unborn children.

So long as they fail to acquire a sense of cleanliness in all the little details of domestic economy and of child-life their children will suffer. At present the Fijians from the lowest to the highest are inexpressibly callous to what we call and feel to be dirt, and, as such, repulsive and dangerous to health.

32. A good deal has been spoken about infanticide in Polynesia. There are many well-informed and experienced persons in the Colony who believe that Fijian women now frequently practise abortion and that many, also, purposely neglect their children in order to let them die, and be themselves relieved of the care and burden of attending to them. It has been said on good authority that girls often dread pregnancy because they are aware how speedily the Fijian primipara loses the attractiveness of youth. Probably such assertions are to a considerable extent true, but owing to the great difficulty of detecting these crimes, and of bringing them home to an offender in a Court of Justice, instances are very seldom made public.

* Mr. Stewart's minute on the Vital Statistics.

33. As regards infanticide I may be permitted to quote one or two authorities.
I read in Stewart's "Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands"*:—

We have the clearest proof that in those parts of the islands where the influence of the Mission has not yet extended, two-thirds of the infants born perish by the hands of their own parents, before attaining the first or second year of their age.

The same author, after describing the squalid and filthy conditions of life and neglect of children common among the Hawaiians in the early part of the present century, goes on to say:—

Indeed, we seldom walk out without meeting many whose appearance of disease and misery is appalling; and some so remediless (*sic*) and disgusting that we are compelled to close our eyes against a sight that fills us with horror. Cases of ophthalmia, scrofula, and elephantiasis are very common.

After making allowances for the exaggerations into which a distinctly flowery and ostentatiously pious writer may have allowed himself to wander, the impression left by a perusal of the Rev. Mr. Stewart's journal points with much weight to the existence in Hawaii in 1823 of all the untutored prodigalities and squalid domestic surroundings, as well as of most of the consequences and diseases, which we see for ourselves at the present day in almost every Pacific Island.

To quote another missionary writer, one whose sphere of observation lay in our own islands and our more immediate neighbour, Tonga, but whose information is mostly given at second hand, culled from the resident missionaries whose work it was his province to visit and inspect—Mr. Lawry, writing in 1847, tells us that—

All the missionaries say that infanticide is very prevalent here, and that the children are mostly destroyed before they are born by means the most startling and revolting, but that many others are murdered after they come forth.†

* * * * *

The history of infanticide here is too revolting to be written; it may be enough to say that it is very general and has not merely become an abominable custom, but is reduced to a system.‡

And speaking of polygamy, he adds that—

The more the wives are multiplied the more the children are murdered.

Mr. Lawry's views present a curious medley of shortsighted religious enthusiasm and plain practical reasoning.

For, forgetting that the earth was replenished for thousands of years apart from the Jewish nation, and long ages before any dissemination of the Christian faith began upon it, he says:—

It is clear to me that Heathenism could never people the world.

But, almost in the same breath, he remarks:—

The preservation of any one of the families of the extensive Polynesian nation in their distinct and present form seems to me unlikely. Others have melted away and what is there to prevent these from sharing the same end?

If they remain heathen, they will fight and destroy one another, until their land shall tempt some powerful adventurers, without any concern but that of gain, to enter their country; and the collision that will follow must end where such collisions always end—ferocity falls before skill. But if they receive the Gospel, as they are almost sure to do where it is clearly and faithfully preached to them, they will become new creatures, and will no longer engage in devastating wars, but will sit down peacefully, enjoying their new and improved condition. They do not all at once become industrious, for they have no motive to engage in wasting labour under a vertical sun: they already have all they need; and the habits, usages, and practice of their nation are adhered to. Civilisation is a thing of slow growth, and requires several generations before it will be worthy of the name. Nations do not readily change their ways, and especially tropical nations, where industry is rendered fatiguing by the heat, and is the less needed on account of the fertility of the soil, and the abundance of fruit-trees. Very little progress has hitherto been made in the civilisation of the South-Sea tribes in the Friendly Isles and Fiji; nor are the signs at all encouraging in this matter.

The expectations entertained in England are by no means realised on the spot, at least not with the rapidity which hope had painted, but left experience to correct. I am of opinion that the probable working out of the problem will be this: that the Gospel preached by our devoted countrymen will save the souls of multitudes in these isles; that this grace will soften their hearts and change their national character from warriors to men of love and peace; that the tide of emigration will sooner or later flow to their shores, and that a fine new race of civilised, mixed, people will cover this part of the earth. Thus while a remnant of them shall be saved, God will show mercy to all who will accept it; and his retributive providence will be seen in the extinction of a nation (as such) that has been so deeply stained with the orgies of idolatry and with blood.

34. These and innumerable other well-informed writers support the belief that the natives of most Pacific Islands, especially the members of the purer Polynesian race have for the most part been decreasing in numbers before white men visited them, and, with a few isolated exceptions, have continued to do so, some more, some less, ever since.

35. Some time ago I made an endeavour to trace the family history of a number of families, say fifty, with a view to recording them and to discover, by this means something like an average rate of increase or decrease and the causes that led up to it. I was met at the outset by insuperable difficulties. No ages were known, periods of time could not be fixed or even guessed at with any reasonable degree of accuracy. My questions relating to conditions of marriage, causes of death, influences restrictive of fecundity, and promotive of infantile death, were all regarded with suspicion and were rarely answered with any air of truth or exactitude. I had to abandon the experiment, which was one, by the way, strongly recommended by the anthropological committee of the British Association.

36. It may, I presume, be safely said that infanticide proper no longer obtains amongst the Fijians, at least not to a greater extent than in the Anglo-Saxon race. That abortion is frequently sought after and pretty often effected is I think the case, though circumstances only allow it to be resorted to clandestinely.

Notwithstanding this, the birth-rate as shown by the Vital Statistics published in 1888 is high, and abortion cannot, therefore, be said to constitute a large or serious item in accounting for the decrease of population.

37.

* 2nd Edition.—London 1828: p. 251.

† Friendly and Feejee Islands; by the Rev. Walter Lawry.—London, 1850: page 134.

‡ *Ibid*: pages 95, 96.

37. With reference to the conditions of marriage, those dependent upon the relative proportion of the sexes have already been admirably and sufficiently set forth in the paper on the Vital Statistics of the Colony already alluded to.

38. It remains to consider *section vi*—the Birth-rate. This has been shown by the official Vital Statistics to be a high one: and as a birth-rate depends in great measure upon the age constitution of a population—which, however, it also influences—and is a very complex subject, it may be well to quote here a recognised authority. Dr. Newsholme states:—*

It is evident that if owing to a high birth-rate there is a larger proportion of children in one community than in another, and the relative sanitary conditions of the two are equal, there will be more deaths of children in the former: and inasmuch as the rate of mortality of young children is higher than that of all others, except the aged, the general death-rate will be raised. But if the high birth-rate be *continued*, there will not only be a large proportion of children, but of others between ten and forty years of age, at which ages a low rate of mortality holds; and this factor counterbalances the other and makes a high birth-rate productive of a low death-rate. Thus, speaking generally, the mortality of a population in which there is an excess of births over deaths is lower than that of a stationary population in which the births and deaths are equal in number, the reason being, on reflection, obvious. In the latter case there is a larger proportion of old people than in the former. The rule therefore is, that *the lower the average age of a population (mean age of living) the lower ought to be its death-rate.*

* * * * *
If a high birth-rate is necessarily followed by a high death-rate, the former must be regarded as an indication of a low sanitary condition. It is difficult to believe however, that an increase of reproductive power argues a depression of vitality.* * That there should be a high death-rate in some populations is in spite of and not in consequence of the high birth-rate, and the high death-rate is due in reality to social and sanitary evils.

When a high death-rate follows a high birth-rate, it is largely due to *excessive infantile mortality*. Infants form a delicate index to the sanitary status of a population.

The whole chapter is instructive and well worthy of study.

39. If we accept the above propositions and apply them to the Fijian race, we are met with a difficulty. (It is true that we have no figures to show exactly the age constitution of the population, but we have the official classification into infants, school-children, adolescents, adults, and aged persons.) The difficulty is that notwithstanding the prevalence of a high birth-rate (36 per 1,000), we have also a still higher death-rate. The statistician just quoted, supported by the late eminent Dr. Farr, the highest authority on Vital Statistics—regards this as an indication of a low sanitary condition, and asserts the death-rate to be attributable to social and sanitary evils, and to be found chiefly amongst infant members of the population.

The circumstances alluded to in detail in the body of this paper point to the same conclusions: but we must not forget that a high rate of mortality in infants under one year of age tends to increase the normal birth-rate by shortening the period of suckling, and thus favouring an earlier recurrence of pregnancy than would otherwise take place. This state of things occurring in women of a race who were formerly accustomed to continue suckling a child for the first two or three years of its life, might possibly affect the stamina of those born under the new order of being.

SUMMARY OF CAUSES.

40. It is admitted that the decline of the population is chiefly brought about by an excessive infantile mortality.

Proximate causes:—

- a. Diseases of the digestive system—dysentery, diarrhœa, worms.
- b. Yaws.
- c. Asthenia, due to strumous or leprous parentage, or consanguinity, or indiscreet actions on the part of the mother during pregnancy, or deficiency of breast-milk, and the absence of any proper substitute for it.
- d. Accidents of child-birth and unskilled midwifery: premature birth and its causes: pulmonary atelectasis.
- e. Itch, ophthalmia, and dirt; and neglect by mothers either purposely or accidentally.
- f. Respiratory diseases—Laryngitis, bronchitis, pneumonia.
- g. Nervous diseases—Tetanus neonatorum.
- h. Accidents—Overlaying, *ramusu*, burns, choking.
- i. Epidemics.—In 1875, measles. 1883–4, whooping-cough. In 1891, whooping-cough and influenza. From time to time—phagedenic dysentery.

41. Predisposing or distal causes:—

- a. Defective hygiene—bad water, improper food, impure air, specific morbid bacteria. Personal uncleanness, domestic filth; low-lying, alluvial, and damp or confined sites for villages or houses. Ignorance of the contagious nature of yaws, and therefore absence of any precautions for avoiding it. Ignorance and want of means for giving proper attention to the sick. Natural distrust of white men's medicines and averseness to our modes of treatment. Listlessness and utter want of application or "savoir faire" or perception of uncleanness in dealing with sick children (or adults). Want of sympathy for suffering. Impatience and dislike of trouble. Selfishness. Disregard for the lives of other persons or other persons' children. Ignorance and inexperience of mothers and nurses. Wilful or casual neglect by mothers. Yaws: inasmuch as it may probably leave effects in after life prejudicial to the bearing of healthy children, or may even react as severely as tertiary syphilis in a parent.
- b. Consanguinity in parents. Withdrawal of the influence which polygamy exerted in promoting the selection of the best women by the best and most wealthy men, and so improving the breed.

The

The effect of monogamy in casting laborious menial duties upon the wife during the period of child-rearing, which were formerly only attended to by wives while free from nursing responsibilities.

- c. Generally, the too sudden sapping of old institutions, customs, and modes of life, through the agency of chiefs, before the race, especially the commoners, was fit for the reception and adoption of the régime—the employment of an eradicating and supplanting method for “civilising,” instead of an engrafting and developmental system—a policy, no doubt, for which there has hitherto existed no alternative, but which should now be merged into a more insidious and profound treatment.
- d. The communal system, deprived of the absolute rule of the chiefs, by the medium of physical fear, is no longer a complete system: it is a mutilated one. By thus modifying it the individual has lost one stimulus, while he has not gained any other in its place. He is without inducement to exert either mind or body—has no need to provide for his old age or his family’s future—places too much dependence in the commune as a whole instead of cultivating self-reliance, and loses his interest in life except as regards its animal pleasures, not being yet educated to the point of comprehending intellectual ones. In connection with this feeling he still treats his women as mere beasts of burden and sexual conveniences, as he did in the olden time, except in cases where a plurality of wives enabled them to be better cared for in turn at the times when most necessary.
- e. The younger women are fickle, fanciful, and perverse: often desire to be unhampered by children and unmarred by gestation. They therefore favour abortion, premature birth, and child-murder by culpable neglect. To rule them by physical fear is not nowadays allowable, but their minds are often so constituted as to yield to no other persuasion, and even to commit suicide when pressed against their inclination.
- f. On the other hand, the old women deserve more praise than any other section of the people, being industrious, long-suffering, kindly—but ignorant.
- g. The children are not trained by their parents. What they learn they merely pick up. No attempt, except in a few of the schools, is made to discipline children. Parents cannot control them by word, and they fear to use the rod lest the children treasure up the memory of it against them and retaliate when they can find means—a sentiment reflecting in the adult native’s mind the impulses of his own youth. Thus, the absence of parental training and the perverseness of children, who grow up into vain and selfish young women and ignorant and listless men, tend towards the bringing about of neglect of cleanliness and reasonably sufficient sanitary precautions, and to the introduction of physical misadventure and intellectual chaos.

QUESTION II.

What remedies are practicable?

42. It does not seem inevitable that the present state of things should always continue.

It is more probable that, if the numbers fall to the extent of placing the native race in a distinctly subordinate relation to the dominant one—speaking as to numerical *and* moral influences—the transition from the old to the new modes of life would be more thorough, and sufficiently rapid to allow the advantages of the latter to gain full sway without the hindering effects of the former preponderating.

It would be comparatively easy to foster a single tribe or a family, because their conversion to civilisation could be controlled thoroughly, and their individual interests could be adequately preserved during the process in spite of themselves and their helplessness.

The construction and employment of some such method of procedure on the larger scale is probably what we should aim at achieving. But it should be a process of evolution—not of revolution.

Pass a measure of oxygen into a bowl of fish within five minutes, and you will first intoxicate and then smother them. But instil the same quantity of oxygen into a similar bowl of fish, bubble by bubble during several days, and you will develop in them a state of advanced physical wellbeing and improved life.

With such indications in view I would therefore—

- i. Institute a Zenana Mission for the domestic improvement and training of the women and children, and for skilled assistance in sickness, child-birth, and nursing. The missionaries should be ladies with experience in sanitation, sick-nursing, obstetrics, and household economy; and should live in the homes of the people, among the people, while engaged in the mission work; but should be given an adequate vacation, and should all belong to one corporate body, and be subject to its ordinances and *morale*.
- ii. Improve the diet of the native by supplying the present deficiency in nitrogenous constituents and fats. To such ends I would encourage the use of maize, and the introduction of horned-cattle for milk. Owing to the awkwardness and inexperience of Fijians in dealing with animals, some such small and easily managed breed as the Indian *bhail* would be the best to begin with. Milk is especially needed for children and invalids.
- iii. Insist on more elevated, better drained, and airily situated places being chosen as village sites, wherever the topographical conditions of the tribal lands will allow.
- iv. Agglomerate somewhat, and cautiously, small and outlying villages into larger and more central ones wherever the latter sites, &c., are favourable, in order to bring all the people more directly within the sphere of educational, administrative, and civilising influences.
- v. Popularise raised floors in houses, especially in low or damp situations; or encourage building on piles.

- vi. Give technical instruction in the construction and preservation of wells and filters for drinking-water—and in due course insist on the disuse of improper ones.
- vii. Endeavour by every possible means to regulate the hours of sleep and the meal times.
- viii. Encourage games; such as *veitiga*, which not only affords healthful exercise to men and boys, but provides a clean and well-kept playground for the village.
- ix. Establish an experimental village as a test model, and conservatory—to be constructed and maintained on the most perfect hygienic lines possible in all respects, to be peopled by selected families, and to be conducted by a duly qualified European married official, who with his wife shall reside in it and be subject, as regards its administration, to the Governor, one Commissioner, and a medical officer, without interference.
- x. Enforce present sanitary Native Regulations more diligently.

I have, &c.,
BOLTON G. CORNEY.

No. 62.

Ratu Joseph Lala, Roko Tui Cakaudrove, to His Excellency the Governor.

Kivua na Kovana,—

Somosomo, 7 March, 1892.

Ie saka,

Au vola yani nai vola ogo vei kemuni e na vuku ni ka ko ni a vosa kina vei au, niu tale mai Vavalagi ko ya na lutu sobu ni tamata e Viti ko ni kaya me'u vukei kemuni kina. Ni yaco na neitou Bose ni Yasana mai Vaturova sa dua tani sara kina na lutu sobu ni tamata e na yasana ogo, mai na gauna ka yaco kina na Bose mai Navatu, ka yacova na Bose ogo ki Vaturova, ka ya e tolu walega na vula, ia ka sa ka rerevaki sara na lutu sobu ni tamata.

Au kacivi ira na Buli me keimami veivosakitaka ka qaqa na lako sobu ni tamata ka ra wele ga ko ira: era nanuma beka ga e ka ni veiwalu. Au qai tukuna vei ira kevaka era weletaka na ka ogo, ka sega ni vukei au kina, e na sega ni yacova e tini na yabaki. Sa oti sara na lewe ni vanua kevaka e tautauvata tiko na mate me vaka na vula tolu ogo.

Ia edua ga na Buli qai bau vukei au e na ka ogo, ko ya ko Buli Savusavu ko Semi Tabucala, qai vakaraitaka na mate ni gone mai na nona tikina ko Savusavu kei Wailevu ni bale vei ira na tinani gone ni ra dau kauti ira ki wai na luvedra e na mataka lailai sara me ra la'ki sili, ka mani tauvi ira kina na mate kete ka ra mate kina. Kenai ka rua ni ra vavai ira na tinadra ni ra sa malumalumu sara na gone ka sega ni yaga me ra vava, ogo na ka ka vakaraitaka mai vei au ko koya na Buli ko ya, ia ka'u vakabauta na ka ka tukuna. Au mani kaya vua kevaka edua na ka vaka ko ya me kauta ki na Veilewai.

Edua talega na ka au nanuma e na lutu ni tamata e Viti. E vakaevei me ra sereki na yagasiri me kakua ni ka ni Veilewai de qai tubu cake kina na tamata, ia me qai ka ga ni Veilewai na taura vakaukauwa na yalewa kei na vei ka ca kece vaka ko ya. Na ka ogo au sa kaya vakarua e na Bose Vakaturaga ka ra qai cata ko ira eso na Roko, ia au nanuma sara mai na yaloqu kevaka sa sere na tamata mai na tikina ka'u tukuna yani ogo sa na qai tubu cake na tamata e Viti, ia ke sega sa na yali na kai Viti.

Koi au, saka, na nomuni tamata vakarorogo,
Ko JOSEPH LALA.

[Translation.]

To His Excellency the Governor,—

Somosomo, 7 March, 1892.

Sir,

I write this in conformity with your Excellency's wish that, upon my return from abroad, I would report upon the Decrease in the Native Population. When the Provincial Council was held at Vaturova it was found that the decrease in this province was very serious: since the last Council held at Navatu, a period of three months, the decrease has indeed been something appalling.

I endeavoured in vain to get the Bulis, with one exception, to bestir themselves and make searching inquiries as to the real cause. They look, perhaps, upon this as a trivial matter. I told them that if they did not arouse themselves from their lethargy, and co-operate with me, the race would become extinct within ten years, according to the rate of deaths during the last three months.

Buli Savusavu (Semi Tabucala) has been the exception, and has reported to me on the mortality of the children in his districts (Savusavu and Wailevu), and states that it is due to the negligence of the mothers. They take their infants to bathe early in the morning, and the result is that they contract bowel complaints, and die. Another cause is that the mothers sling their children on their backs whilst too young. I agree with this Buli, and have told him to prosecute any mothers found guilty of these acts.

I myself have an opinion regarding the decrease of population. Possibly it would have the effect of increasing the population if persons guilty of fornication were no longer punishable in the courts, but only those guilty of rape or other similar crimes. Let only cases of rape and other offences of a like nature be punishable. I have twice already mentioned this in the Annual Meetings of Chiefs, but some other chiefs were opposed to it. I think that if this were done the race would multiply: if not the race will die out.

I am, Sir, &c.,
JOSEPH LALA.

No. 63.

W. Lydiard, Esq., Planter, Savusavu, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Matatedeke, Savusavu East, 18 March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Circular of February 28th, inviting expressions of ideas on the Mortality of the Native Population. In reply, I have the honour to state that in my opinion there are several causes which tend to produce the evil complained of. I beg to state that for some time past I have taken particular notice that the death-rate amongst natives has been greatly on the increase, especially among young women (both married and single) and infants. I think in a great measure the causes are—the unhealthy situations of some of the native towns, and the dirty state they have been kept in till a very recent date. Most of their houses are small and out of repair, and too many live in one house. The want of care to infants by their mothers. I have on several occasions seen women going out fishing at night in heavy rain taking their children with them—infants from two to three months old with very bad colds on them at the time.

I would also call your attention to in-breeding. It is generally the young people of the same town who marry; it is seldom the man or woman are from another town any distance away, and very rare indeed when husband or wife are from another district or island. Another thing is abortion, which has become a very common thing among young married women.

I have, &c.,
W. LYDIARD.

No. 64.

The Reverend J. P. Chapman, Wesleyan Missionary, Bua, to His Excellency the Governor.

Your Excellency,

Bua, 25 April, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Circular referring to the Decadence of the Native Race, and to express regret that owing to absence from home and other engagements I have been prevented from replying at an earlier date.

Owing to the want of an accumulation of information of evidential value I feel some considerable difficulty in writing upon the subject.

In conversation with a native woman a short time ago, I asked her what she thought was the cause of the great mortality among the children, and she answered, "It is the fault of the mothers."

That they are to blame to some extent is undoubtedly true; but I think the question is one which affects not only the mothers but also the fathers.

It seems to me not only necessary to inquire as to what remedies can be applied to the leakage, but what can be done towards rightfully influencing the supply.

As weak and unhealthy men and women cannot be expected to propagate healthy robust species, and many of the children born seem to lack stamina, and hence die before they are a month or a year old, the thought is forced upon one that not only does the means of preservation seem to be at fault but also the procreative power.

The practice of fornication and adultery, with their concomitant abortion which is, I fear, too often procured by herbs and rough operations, cannot but prove more or less injurious to the progenital organs of those guilty of their practise, nullifying fecundity in some, and often producing a puny issue in others.

The use of *yagona* and the excessive use of tobacco by pregnant women and nursing-mothers has surely a deleterious influence upon them, and through them upon the children.

The absurd and superstitious practice which obtains of isolating the wives from their husbands during the time of suckling, often aggravated by the despatch of the wife (by the seniors) to distant friends during weaning time, must cause an unnecessarily long separation of husband and wife and affect somewhat the birth-rate as well as abet adultery.

The difficulties often placed in the way of consummating rightful marriages by some disaffected relation have led to fornication and other evils.

The close blood-relationship which exists between many a husband and wife may bear slightly upon this as also the youthfulness of many girls at the time of marriage.

There is no doubt that much depends upon the mothers, but what seems to me to be of the greatest importance is the providing of nourishing foods for them at the time of confinement and subsequently.

Too often the fathers are to blame in failing to provide a regular supply (to this there are many honourable exceptions, especially among Yasawans), but the *tabu* on salt, and foods and liquids by the old women is perhaps the greatest evil, and renders more aid than any other thing towards weakening the mothers and starving the children.

There is no doubt but that cocoanuts ought to be used more freely in all their culinary arrangements, and especially for making oil for anointing purposes.

Frequent observation of the effects of *yagona* as a beverage move me to indite it as pernicious to the vitality of the natives.

It is admitted by many to be injurious, and there are cases in which it has been acknowledged to have been the primary cause of death.

That many who have ceased to use it have made marked improvement physically cannot be denied, and that recuperated genital power has resulted in some cases I am inclined to believe.

Tobacco

Tobacco has been charged with producing "great prostration of strength," but what is the full effect of the excessive use of much of the stuff used as tobacco it is difficult to say, although it seems probable that directly and indirectly it is playing an active part in the impoverisation of the physical forces of the native race.

Although much has been done for the people in the removal of some towns from unhealthy sites, still much more is necessary to be accomplished before the sanitary conditions of the towns as a whole can be considered satisfactory.

I have held the opinion for some time that much oppressiveness is felt, and privations endured, in providing the necessary cost of too large a vessel—and in some places too many vessels.

Those years have meant abstention from the use of the nuts, either as food or for making oil for anointing purposes, or for the purchase of clothes. Much might be done in this respect which would prove beneficial, both physically and morally.

Other thoughts might be given, but with the above I must close, hoping that, although late, some point untouched by others may be found herein, which may prove of some service to your Excellency.

I have, &c.,
J. P. CHAPMAN.

No. 65.

H. E. Leefe, Esq., Acting Resident Commissioner, Rotumah, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Rotumah, 2 March, 1892.

In answer to your Circular, dated February 3rd, No. $\frac{431}{1892}$, I presume His Excellency intends me to confine myself to remarks *re* the Decrease in the Population of Rotumah, a matter which has occupied much of my attention since I came here. Out of the 123 deaths which took place on this island during the year 1891—

59 were old people
13 „ middle-aged and young
51 „ young children.

The old people who died were generally very old, and the children very young.

1. *What are the predisposing causes of mortality?*

I should place interbreeding at the head of all these, nearly every person on this island being more or less related. The mortality among the children of Whites married to Rotumans is very small, also where a large percentage of Line Island blood exists—the district of Itumutu for example, where the people are a much taller and finer class.

The scrofula existing on this island at present is something appalling. I believe I am safe in saying that one-half of the people are affected, principally the women.

The healthy young men go away to Torres Straits and Fiji; and the sickly ones remain and beget children.

Pulmonary diseases come next—the Rotumans are nearly all affected in their chests. This I attribute greatly to their habit of working all day in their clothes and at night playing and sleeping on the beach with only a loin-cloth on. Another cause no doubt is their love of working in the rain.

The children are tended carefully after birth; and hard work for the women can certainly not be adduced as a cause.

2. *What remedies are practicable?*

So far as this island is concerned, the principal remedy would be the importation of new blood. This would have to be done by bringing women, as male strangers would have no rights here. Fijian women would not be welcomed, but those from Samoa, the Ellice Group, and some of the Line Islands would amalgamate well with the Rotumans. I fully recognise the difficulty of this measure, but I firmly believe it would be the only way of saving the race, which is, without exception, the nicest one I have ever had to deal with; and the extinction of which would be a general loss to the whole Australasian Archipelago.

With reference to the pulmonary affection, the only plan is to try and inculcate wisdom into the people.

I have, &c.,
H. E. LEEFE.

No. 66.

W. W. Thomas, Esq., Planter, Yaqara, Ra, to The Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

Yaqara, 20 May, 1892.

In reply to your further communication of the 6th April, I have the honour to say that the few remarks I venture to offer as to some of the causes leading to a Decrease of the Native Population arise from what has come under my own personal observation and knowledge of the habits of the Fijians.

1st.

1st.—The primary causes of mortality among infants arises in a great measure from the neglect of the mothers during suckling. This may be by their lengthened absence in the plantations, when they are often left at home, and are for hours without the care and sustenance that the mothers only can afford; and

2nd.—By the parent's absence fishing, when on her return the child is often put to the breast while the mother remains in a wet, damp state, thus conveying to the infant a chill which sometimes leads to a fatal result; and

3rd.—By the exposure which the child frequently undergoes on the mother's back when moving about in inclement weather.

4th.—Another cause of want of increase arises from want of cohabitation between man and wife, in cases where people marry more to further the wishes of their friends than from mutual regard for each other, which often leads to the woman indulging in indiscriminate connection with other men; which, if conception ensues therefrom, makes her resort to means of procuring abortion—a practice that much more largely prevails than the authorities have any knowledge of.

5th.—There is a practice existing among Fijians on marrying called *kanavata*, whereby the man and woman do not enter on married life until that has taken place. This practice I have known to extend over a period of two years owing to the husband's lack of means to provide the *yau* or property which is customary on these occasions.

These observations are, I fear, of a very crude character; and had opportunity permitted, I might have afforded His Excellency personally much more information than is conveyed in this communication.

I have, &c.,

W. W. THOMAS.

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT ON THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE NATIVE POPULATION.—YEAR 1890 AND 1891.

The Acting Assistant Native Commissioner to The Honourable the Colonial
Secretary.

Sir,

Provincial Department, Suva, 4th July, 1892.

I have the honour to submit herewith the twelfth Annual Report on the Vital Statistics of the Native Population of the Colony. Of the sixteen tables that accompany the Report, Tables A to G contain the returns for the year 1890, and Tables Aa to Gg those for the year 1891. Table H gives a Summary of the Vital Statistics for the decade intervening between the Census of 1881 and 1891, and Table H2 gives the same summary extended to December 31st, 1891.* As the decrease in the Native Population, as shown by Table H, is considerably less than that indicated by a comparison of the two last Censuses, I beg leave to submit some remarks upon this Return before adverting to the Vital Statistics of the last two years.

2. It will be noticed from Table H that the total decrease for the period April 1881 to April 1891 is 4,602, as follows :—

Year.	Increase.	Decrease.
1881 (6 months)	173	—
1882 (12 „)	114	—
1883 (12 „)	33	—
1884 (15 „)	—	3,172
1885 (12 „)	—	588
1886 (12 „)	—	973
1887 (12 „)	445	—
1888 (12 „)	559	—
1889 (12 „)	—	468
1890 (12 „)	—	333
1891 (3 „)	—	392
	1,324	5,926
	Net Decrease..... 4,602	

3. It is noticeable that, excluding the year 1884 (in which there was a severe visitation of whooping-cough) and the first quarter of 1891, the decrease in the population would not have amounted to more than 1,038. The decrease is distributed between the years 1884-6 and 1889-91. During these years epidemic diseases of whooping-cough, catarrhal influenza, and dysentery were especially prevalent among the natives. The highest increase for the period was in 1887 (445) and in 1888 (559); and during those years the natives were comparatively free from epidemic diseases. It might, therefore, be inferred that if the natives could be freed from epidemic diseases of European origin, or could be rendered better able to resist them, their numbers would not decrease. The following diagram will serve to show the fluctuations of the population during the decade in relation to the prevalence of epidemics :—



* Tables not printed.

4. The Census taken in 1881 estimated the native population at 114,748. If this was correct, and the Vital Statistics of the decade were equally accurate, there would have been on April 5th, 1891 (the date of the last Census), 110,150; but the actual figure obtained was 102,762, which, with the addition of 3,038 for labourers, Government employés, &c., enumerated separately, amounts to 105,800, and this number when compared with the Census of 1881 would show a decrease of 8,948, or 77 per mille, while the Vital Statistics for the decade register a decrease of only 4,602, or 40 per mille. It is, therefore, obvious that either the Census or the Vital Statistics were unreliable.

5. The Census of 1881 was taken upon a somewhat primitive system—the best that could be devised to suit the capacity of the natives at that time, when some approximation to accuracy was all that could be hoped for—but not to be relied upon to produce anything more than a rough estimate of the population. Any tendency to error on the part of the enumerators would have been to overstate the numbers of their people and, therefore, their importance. But in 1891 a more regular system was adopted. Forms having spaces for the name of every native were distributed in more than sufficient numbers for every village in the Colony, and on April 5th the name of every person sleeping in the village was to be recorded. On the whole, fair intelligence was shown by the enumerators; but there can be no doubt that errors, both intentional and ignorant, occurred, which in the aggregate amounted to a considerable number. The forms each contained eighty-one spaces for names, and in no less than 2·49 per cent. of the villages the form was exactly filled up. In one village in Namosi it was afterwards found that sixty names had been omitted. The enumerator, either thinking that his task was completed, or having spoilt one form and being unprovided with a second, neglected to record any more names. But there was another reason for the last Census being an understatement of population. A feeling seems to have prevailed in certain districts that the Census was being taken with the view of increasing the tax assessment. In one province the European Tax Inspector had for his own information counted the tax-payers a short time before the decennial Census, and it was not unnatural that the people of that province should see a connection between the two. But, however this idea may have arisen, it certainly existed, and it naturally formed a strong motive for understating the population.

6. The Vital Statistics, on the other hand, are free from the above tendencies to error. The system of registration is simple, and efficiently worked. The Registrars are the District and Provincial Scribes, who can have no motive for misrepresentation. Whatever errors may occur are errors of omission, and the omissions would be equally distributed between the births and deaths, and would not much affect the figures of increase or decrease. Indeed, the tendency would be rather towards the concealment of births than of deaths, and this would go towards exaggerating rather than understating the decrease.

7. I have, therefore, preferred to continue estimating the total population upon the Census of 1881, modified by the Vital Statistics of the decade, rather than to take a new departure by accepting the Census of 1891 as correct—a course which would at once preclude the fair comparison of the birth- and death-rates of the current decade with those of past years.

8. The Vital Statistics for 1890 and 1891 show a net decrease of 333 in 1890, and 1,567 in 1891; the mortality in 1891 being much swelled by an epidemic of Influenza during the last quarter of the year.

9. The population was shown by the Census of 1881 to be 114,748. During the 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years from that date till December, 1891, there was a net decrease of 5,777, *i.e.*, 50·35 per mille or 4·68 per annum. In 1890 the rate of decrease was 3·01 and in 1891 14·17 per mille.

10. The rates of births, deaths, and marriages during the two years, as compared with the mean rates for 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years, are as follows:—

	Mean for 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years.	1890.	1891.
Birth-rate per 1,000	38·48	35·91	35·54
Death-rate „	42·76	38·92	49·72
Marriage-rate „	9·72	8·99	9·01

The vitality of the years 1890–1, as compared with the period 1881–1891, may be summarised as follows:—

For every 1,000 births during 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years there were	1,126 deaths.
„ „ 1890 „	1,083 „
„ „ 1891 „	1,397 „
For every 1,000 males born during 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years there were	901 females born.
„ „ 1890 „	949 „
„ „ 1891 „	904 „
For every 1,000 male deaths during 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years there were	889 female deaths.
„ „ 1890 „	873 „
„ „ 1891 „	893 „

11. *Births.*—As compared with European countries the birth-rate remains high, but there is a steady tendency to decrease. That this tendency is not confined to Fiji may be seen from the following table, and, though general, the decrease is more marked in some countries than others. In Fiji it may be ascribed to diminished fecundity of each marriage, for there has been no corresponding degree of decrease in the marriage-rate, and the diminishing *age-constitution* owing to the long-continued and excessive infant mortality.

Birth-rate

Birth-rate per 1,000 Living in Different Countries.

Countries.	Mean Annual Rate, 1861-1880.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.
England and Wales ...	35·3	33·9	33·7	33·3	33·3	32·5	32·4	31·4	.....	.....	.....	.....
Denmark	31·2	32·3	32·4	31·8	33·4	32·6	32·6	32·	.....	.....	.....	.....
Ireland.....	26·2 (17 years)	24·5	24·1	23·6	24·	23·5	23·3	23·2	.....	.....	.....	.....
Norway	30·8 (10 years)	30·	30·9	30·9	31·	31·3	30·9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
German Empire	39·6 (9 years)	37·	37·2	36·6	37·2	37·	37·1	36·9	.....	.....	.....	.....
Italy.....	37·1 (18 years)	38·	37·1	37·1	38·7	38·1	36·1	35·3	.....	.....	.....	.....
France.....	25·9	24·9	24·8	24·8	24·8	24·3	23·9	23·5	.....	.....	.....	.....
Hungary	42·8 (15 years)	43·7	44·6	45·3	46·	.....	45·5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Fiji	38·48 (10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years)	40·68	37·19	38·46	36·98	38·90	35·71	40·10	40·19	36·24	35·91	35·54

12. The following provinces exceeded in 1891 the mean birth-rate for the Colony for the 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years 1881-91 (38·48), arranged in their order of precedence :—

Province.	Birth-rate per 1,000, 1890.	Out of every 100 children born in 1890 there died	Birth-rate per 1,000, 1891.	Out of every 100 children born in 1891 there died
Yasawa ...	36·29	13·6	44·01	52·5
Colo West ...	44·30	42·0	43·61	69·1
Lomaiviti ...	37·69	28·3	42·29	37·3
Colo East ...	40·26	25·3	41·06	41·1
Naitasiri ...	43·41	62·9	40·42	28·4
Nadroga ...	42·86	61·9	39·78	62·8

The following provinces had in 1891 a birth-rate lower than the mean birth-rate for the same period :—

Province.	Birth-rate per 1,000, 1890.	Out of every 100 children born in 1890 there died	Birth-rate per 1,000, 1891.	Out of every 100 children born in 1891 there died
Kadavu ...	34·67	41·2	38·10	36·5
Ra ...	35·77	62·2	37·17	101·2
Rewa ...	35·57	11·8	35·27	20·5
Serua ...	38·30	40·6	35·22	82·2
Namosi ...	30·78	39·0	35·20	48·9
Lau ...	42·56	29·6	35·15	34·5
Ba ...	38·02	32·6	34·27	45·7
Tailevu ...	31·61	45·7	31·09	45·8
Bua ...	34·89	26·6	30·47	90·8
Cakaudrove ...	30·09	37·3	27·27	86·1
Macuata ...	28·20	50·0	26·57	89·4

It will be noticed from the foregoing table that Bua, Cakaudrove, and Macuata—the three provinces of Vanualevu—show a very low and steadily-decreasing birth-rate. In the year 1887, when there was a net increase for the Colony of 445, these three provinces not only had the lowest birth-rate, but were also the only provinces with a decrease. The decline in the birth-rate for those provinces has been steady and sustained.

	1887.	1890.	1891.
Bua ...	36·91	34·89	30·47
Cakaudrove ...	34·38	30·09	27·27
Macuata ...	33·70	28·20	26·57

They have moreover the highest still-birth rate, which seems to support the statement often made by the natives that criminal abortion is commonly practised, more especially in Macuata. It is difficult to assign a cause for this declining birth-rate. It is true that these provinces have a stronger admixture of Polynesian blood than all the others except Lau, and perhaps Lomaiviti, but the two last-named provinces form an exception to any theory based upon race origin.

Yasawa continues to exhibit the highest birth-rate.

13. *Deaths.*—The death-rate for 1890 (38·92), was lower than the mean rate for the 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years—1881-91 (42·76), while that for 1891, for reasons already given, far exceeded it (49·72). The following provinces had, in 1891, a lower death-rate than the mean rate for 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years, arranged in their order of precedence :—

Province.

Province.	1890.	1891.	Decrease rate, 1891, per cent.
Lau	37·01	36·95	·1
Namosi	28·52	37·45	·22
Kadavu	33·76	37·71	0
Ba	35·33	38·04	·37
Rewa	32·51	39·08	·38
Nadroga	44·63	40·18	·03
Naitisiri	43·41	42·55	·2

The death-rate in the following provinces exceeds the mean rate for the same period :—

Tailevu	38·50	45·94	1·41
Colo West	47·24	48·69	·51
Macuata	34·92	51·00	2·50
Yasawa	30·88	52·24	·83
Colo East	41·74	54·55	1·36
Lomaiviti... ..	39·61	54·79	1·52
Serua	38·34	54·83	2
Cakaudrove	34·92	56·52	2·80
Bua	39·62	65·20	3·59
Ra	49·02	66·67	2·95

The provinces of Bua and Ra have both the highest death-rate and the highest rate of decrease, but in the latter particular they are closely followed by Macuata and Cakaudrove. Unlike the three others the decrease in Ra is due to excessive mortality rather than to a low birth-rate, and this mortality was fairly distributed throughout each quarter of 1891. It was due to the ravages of dysentery among children whose deaths under one year of age reached the appalling proportion of 101·2 for every hundred born,—in other words it would seem that not one of the children born in 1891 survived.

The death-rate in the other provinces was generally far higher in 1891 than in 1890 ; but an epidemic of influenza introduced during the last quarter of the year largely contributed to swell the mortality.

14. *Infantile Mortality.*—If the death-rate among infants had not exceeded the proportions prevailing in European countries, there would have been a material increase in population in both 1890 and 1891. The following figures will show how deplorably high the rate of infantile mortality continues :—

Deaths of Infants under One Year of age.

London, mean of ten years (1876–1885)	...	15·2 per 100 births.
Lancashire " " "	...	16·3 " "
Cumberland " " "	...	12·6 " "
Fiji (mean of seven years)	...	45·1 " "
" 1890 ... ..	...	40 (of which 17 per cent. were deaths under one month.)
" 1891 ... ..	...	58 (of which 23 were deaths under one month).

The proportions of the mortality in 1891 distributed among the different age-groups show conclusively that the decrease in the population is due to the excessive mortality among children.

Age-groups.	Proportion per cent.	Totals.
0—1 month	17·03	58·16 Children.
1 m.—1 year	24·67	
1—10 years	16·46	
Youths	5·99	23·27 Reproductive age.
Adults	17·28	
Aged	18·57	18·57
<hr/>		
100·00		

More than half the total deaths are those of children under ten years of age, and more than two-fifths are those of children under one year. If these excessive proportions could be reduced by one-half for ten successive years, there would be not only a substantial increase of population, but the number of young children passing over into the reproductive and low mortality ages would have a permanent effect upon the age-constitution of the race, which, as I shall presently show, is now becoming seriously affected for the worse.

The proportions of infant deaths in each province are given in columns 2 and 4 of paragraph 12.

25. *Still-births.*—If the excessive infantile mortality be due to physical incapacity of the women for bearing children able to resist the attacks of disease, one would expect to find the proportion of still-births exceptionally large. That this is the case the following figures will show ; but it is right to say that less dependence can be placed on the return of still-births than upon the other figures owing to the probability that some of the District Scribes include still-births among the deaths, and that others enter the deaths of newly-born children as still-births. But while making due allowances for error, there remains a remarkable concurrence between the still-births and the death-rate among children.

In making the following calculations, I have added the still-births to the total births. The proportion of the former to the latter is as follows :—

1890	For the Colony, 5·32 per cent. of the total births.
1891	" 6·13 " "

The

The next highest recorded is that for 1883, viz., 5·02.

The proportion of still-births to total births in the different provinces is as follows:—

Province.	1887.	1890.	1891.	Remarks.
1. Namosi	4·09	2·38	0	These provinces show a lower death-rate than the average for the Colony in 1891.
2. Yasawa	3·46	1·72	0	
3. Kadavu	1·46	0	0	
4. Ba	1·82	0	0·35	
5. Nadroga	0·74	3·53	0·98	
6. Lau	4·93	3·45	3	
7. Naitasiri	3·15	2·40	4·04	
8. Rewa	3·29	4·12	4·14	All these provinces, except Colo West, show a higher death-rate than the average for the Colony in 1891. The four last show an infant mortality of over 86 per cent. of the total births. (See para. 12, column 234).
9. Serua	5·12	5·48	4·81	
10. Tailevu	3·58	6·50	5·81	
11. Colo East	4·36	8·72	6·41	
12. Colo West	3·12	3·90	7·30	
13. Lomaiviti	6·97	8·3	8·05	
14. Ra	5·87	9·97	9·13	
15. Macuata	6·89	8·51	9·55	
16. Cakaudrove	5·64	7·04	10·02	
17. Bua	9·53	6·14	10·38	

There are 70 per cent. more male still-births than female, owing probably to greater difficulty in the parturition of male children, for there is an excess of male still-births in Europe. In France 144 males are still-born for every 100 females.

The proportion of still-births per cent. of total births in European countries is as follows:—

Hungary	2·7
Denmark	2·8
Germany... ..	3·8
Italy	3·6
England and Wales	4 (about), not recorded separately.
France	4·5 (includes deaths occurring before registration).
Belgium	4·9
Netherlands	4·9
Fiji	6·13

There would, therefore, appear to be a direct connection between the proportion of still-births and the death-rate of infants. The significance of this fact is obvious. If a high still-birth rate were due to the extensive practice of criminal abortion only, no such close concurrence would be expected: but a high still-birth rate,—itself an indication of weak procreative power in the female,—coinciding with a high rate of infantile mortality is evidence that such mortality is due less to neglect by the parents of the children than to actual congenital weakness. The causes for the excessive mortality among infants have been recently too exhaustively discussed to be examined here; but I may point out that the reasons advanced by the natives themselves, viz., physical weakness of their women due (1) to their having children in too rapid succession (*dabe*); (2) to the early seduction and sexual immorality of the young girls; and (3) to the effects of foreign diseases beginning about 1800 with the *lila*, and followed in 1874 by the measles and a number of minor epidemics—would seem to receive more support from an examination of the Vital Statistics than any other theory hitherto propounded.

16. *Age-Constitution*.—The most remarkable feature in the constitution of the various age-groups is the small proportion of children to adults. The children under fourteen or fifteen years of age are only 33·32 per cent. of the whole population; this allows, roughly speaking, only one living child to each pair of adults. This fact is the more remarkable since the number of children born in Fiji is exceptionally high, and no clearer indication that the population is decreasing is required.

For the purpose of the following calculations, I have used the returns of the Census taken in 1891; for, although, for reasons stated in paragraph 5, it is clear that these figures fall short of the actual number of the population, they are approximate enough to afford reliable data for the proportions of the various age-groups. The classifications in use in taking the census in Fiji, where scarcely one native knows his age, are necessarily crude and inexact. They are four in number, viz.:—(1) Children, *i.e.*, from birth to puberty (about fifteen); (2) Youths (the word *cauravou* implies arrival at puberty), *i.e.*, from puberty to marriage, (fifteen to twenty-five in the male and fifteen to twenty-one in the female); (3) Adults, *i.e.*, from marriage to about fifty; and (4) Aged, *i.e.*, from fifty upwards.

That the second period is longer for males than females is shown by the fact that the females classified in that group are only 61 per cent. of the males. Females also pass into the group of aged at a rather earlier age than the males, for we find the numbers in that group nearly equal; but the two middle groups, covering the period from puberty to infecundity, taken together, give the proportion per cent. (to the whole population) of the people at the healthy and reproductive periods of life.

The age-constitution of the Colony in 1881 and 1891 may be compared as follows:—

Age-groups.—Proportion per cent. of the Population.		1881.	1891.	1891.	
0-15 years	...	—	32·39	...	33·32
15-25 "	...	18·74	51·97	17·54	51·83
25-50 "	...	33·23		34·29	
50 upwards	...	—	15·64	...	14·85
		100·		100·	

Thus

Thus unfavourable as the age-constitution of the native population undoubtedly is, there is a ray of hope in the fact that there has been, in spite of the abnormal infantile mortality during the past decade, a slight improvement in the proportion of children since 1881, and no deterioration in the proportion of adults at the reproductive ages. But because the already high average age of the population has not still further increased, it is not to be hoped that the long continued drain upon the sources of the population will leave the constitution of the race unhurt. It is one of the axioms of Vital Statisticians that the higher the average age of a population (mean age of living) the higher ought to be its death-rate. If a fair number of the children born were to survive, the proportion of the population between ten and forty—at which ages a low rate of mortality holds—would increase, and the death-rate be lowered; but if, notwithstanding a high birth-rate, comparatively few of the children survive, the adults will approach old age and infecundity and there will be none to take their places in the reproductive and healthy ages, so that the average age or age-constitution of the population will become higher, the birth-rate lower, and the death-rate, swelled by the increased proportion of the aged, will rise steadily. To extend Addison's allegory that likens human life to a ruined bridge with pitfalls set thick at either end through which the passengers fall into the tide beneath, the first arch of our bridge in Fiji is so ruinous that scarce half the passengers get across it; and those who have passed it, hurrying on to the further end, will leave the middle and safer part well nigh empty, since those who should have taken their places will have already fallen through the first arch.

The age-constitution of the various provinces in 1891, arranged in the order of their proportion of children may be compared from the following table:—

Province.	0—15 years.	Reproductive Ages.		50—80 years.	Total Reproductive Age.
		15—25 years.	25—50 years.		
Yasawa	40·5	20·4	29·4	9·7	49·8
Lau	37·7	14·5	36·2	11·6	50·7
Nadroga	36·6	12·4	37·2	13·8	49·6
Serua	36·5	16·3	35·4	11·8	51·7
Ba	34·1	22·2	26·5	17·2	48·7
Namosi	33·8	12·3	40·4	13·5	52·7
Ra	33·4	15·4	32·1	19·1	47·5
(Lomaiviti	33·2	17·4	35·0	14·4	52·4
(Colo West	33·2	16·5	31·1	20·2	47·6
(Kadavu	33·2	14·0	40·7	12·1	54·7
Colo East	32·7	17·6	39·8	9·9	57·4
Naitasiri	32·5	22·4	33·6	11·5	56·0
Rewa	32·3	17·4	35·8	14·5	49·3
Tailevu	31·9	18·1	33·7	16·3	51·8
Cakaudrove	31·4	22·2	30·1	16·3	52·3
Bua	31·3	17·7	37·3	13·7	55·0
Macuata	30·4	19·0	35·4	15·2	54·4

Upon reference to columns 2 and 4 of the table given in paragraph 12, it will be seen that Yasawa, which has the largest proportion of children has also the highest birth-rate; and that Cakaudrove, Bua, Macuata, and Ra, which have a low percentage of children and a large proportion of aged, have also an annual infantile mortality of over 86 per cent. of the total births, and the highest still-birth rates in the Colony.

18.—Proportion of the Sexes,—

In 1881 there were 88·4 females to every 100 males.
,, 1887 ,, 88·8 ,, ,, ,,
,, 1891 ,, 90·4 ,, ,, ,,

There are in Fiji as in Europe more males born than females. In England 104 females are born to every 100 males, but the sexes become equalised about the tenth year, and subsequently emigration and the greater dangers to which men are exposed reduce the proportion of males to 94·9 per 100 females.

But in Fiji the excess of male births is greater than in Europe.

In 1890—94 females were born to every 100 males,
,, 1891—90 ,, ,, ,, ,,

and although females show the greater viability the absence of emigration and dangerous occupations prevents the inequality between the sexes from being restored.

In 1890 there were 87 female deaths per 100 male deaths.
,, 1891 ,, 87 ,, ,, ,,
,, 1890 ,, 112 male deaths per 100 male births, and
 103 female deaths per 100 female births.
,, 1891 ,, 140 male deaths per 100 male births, and
 138 female deaths per 100 female births.

But

But while the females as a whole maintain a greater viability than the males they exhibit a lower vitality at certain ages—notably between the ages of one to ten years, and from marriage to fifty; the latter being probably due to the dangers incident to child-birth.

It is, however, at the reproductive period of life that the proportion of females is of vital importance to the race, and it is this age-group that the low female vitality, commented on by the Assistant Colonial Secretary in his minute on the Report of the Vital Statistics for 1887, and the excessive infantile mortality have most seriously affected.

In 1881 there were 90·2 females per 100 males at the reproductive period.

In 1891 there were 86·7.

In 1881 females at the reproductive period were 52·5 of the total female population.

In 1891 they had fallen to 50·7.

The distribution of this proportion of females at the reproductive period among the various provinces may be seen from the following table:—

Province.	Percentage of females at Reproductive Ages to total females, 1891.	Percentage of females to males at Re- productive Ages, 1891.
Lomaiviti	52·8	93
Kadavu	54·7	92
Colo East	55·9	91
Naitasiri	56·0	91
Ra	47·0	90
Namosi	50·2	89
Colo West	46·4	89
Tailevu	52·2	88
Yasawa	49·2	88
Cakaudrove	51·2	85
Bua	52·7	85
Macuata	52·6	83
Nadroga	47·2	82
Serua	49·0	82
Rewa	51·6	80
Ba	46·0	79
Lau	47·3	77

19. *Suicides*.—The rate of suicides appears not to be in excess of European countries.

The suicide rate in England in 1887 was '008 per mille.

In Fiji 1890 „ '008 „
 „ 1891 „ '005 „

20. In spite of the general similarity of native life throughout the Colony the provinces show so great a variation in their vital condition that in considering remedial measures it is necessary to summarise the statistics of each province separately, beginning with those most favourably situated.

YASAWA—with its high and steadily maintained birth-rate, low still-birth rate, and fair proportion (88 per cent.) of females to males at the reproductive ages—is well constituted for a steady increase in population. In 1891 epidemic influenza and dysentery destroyed 52 out of every 100 children born, but in 1890 the infantile mortality (13·6) was lower than the average for London. The death-rate, moreover, although high, has been generally less than the mean rate for the Colony for 10½ years. The proportion of children in Yasawa places the age constitution in a better state than any other province.

COLO EAST AND COLO WEST.—These two provinces are as closely connected in their vital statistics as they are geographically and ethnologically. Their birth-rate is high (43 and 41 per mille), and their death-rate, increased by excessive infantile mortality, is also high. Their rate of still-births is slightly above the average. Their age-constitution appears low owing to the high mortality in the first age-group; but in their high female vitality (91 and 89 per cent. of males at the reproductive period) they have ample recuperative resources.

NADROGA.—The birth-rate is above the average, and the death-rate was less abnormal in 1891 than elsewhere. There were no still-births. The age-constitution is one of the best in the Colony, but the female vitality is low.

KADAVU is similar to Nadroga. The age-constitution is about the average, and the proportion of females at the reproductive period is high. This was the only province that did not show a decrease in 1891.

NAMOSI.—This province should show an annual increase when the infantile mortality (48 per cent. of births) can be checked. Its age-constitution is fair, and there is a sufficient proportion of females at a reproductive age.

LOMAIVITI.—The condition of this province has improved during the last ten years. The proportion of reproductive females has increased 12 per cent., and the birth-rate (41) is high. This is one of the provinces in which inquests upon the deaths of children conducted by Native Magistrates would not only furnish valuable information, but would also serve to check the lamentable neglect of children shown by the fact that 37 per cent. of the children born died under one year of age.

LAU has a medium birth-rate, a death-rate below the average for the Colony, and a low still-birth rate. There is a large proportion of children in Lau, and consequently a good age-constitution. The female proportion has, however, decreased 8 per cent. since 1881, and is now the lowest in the Colony. In several of the small islands of this province the people have married among themselves for generations without apparent injury to their reproductive power. Scrofulous diseases are, however, common in Lau. Having in view the extremely low proportion of females at a reproductive age, the young men of the province should be encouraged to marry women from other provinces. The marriage-rate is, of course, low, and the women have not a high reputation for morality.

NAITASIRI.—This small province has a high birth-rate (40), and, in spite of the fact that a number of coolies are employed on the sugar estates in the province, the death-rate is less than the mean rate for the Colony for 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ years. The still-birth rate is about the average. Both the age-constitution and the proportion of females are above the average. The infantile mortality was lower in this province than any other in 1891, though it was high in 1890.

BA.—The birth-rate is medium, and the death-rate not excessive. There were few still-births. There is a fair proportion of children, but a very low proportion of females at reproductive ages. The infantile mortality (45 per cent.) calls for regular inquests.

SERUA.—Birth-rate about the average. Death-rate very high. Still-birth rate medium. The proportion of children is high, but the female vitality is lower than the average. Some of the natives in this province, notably at Deuba, are in receipt of large incomes from banana-growing. The infantile mortality, however, reached the proportion, in 1891, of 82 for every 100 born, and, unless this can be checked the age-constitution of so small a province will be seriously impaired. Inquests by Native Magistrates, as suggested for Lomaiviti, are very necessary in this province.

REWA has a medium birth-rate, and the lowest rate of infantile mortality in the Colony. The death-rate was slightly below the average. Both the age-constitution and proportion of females were low.

TAILEVU.—The birth-rate (30) is low, and the death-rate high (45). The infantile mortality was 45 per cent. of the births. The still-birth rate was medium, and the age-constitution low. The proportion of females (88) is, however, high, so that there is recuperative energy whenever the death-rate can be checked.

Between Tailevu and the four provinces remaining to be summarised there is a wide gap. The position of Ra, Bua, Cakaudrove, and Macuata can only be described as highly unsatisfactory, for there is not only a high death-rate to contend with, but also a birth-rate far below the average in all but Ra.

RA showed, in 1891, an annual decrease rate of 3.01, no less than 101 children having died for every 100 born. The general death-rate was 66—the highest in the Colony. The birth-rate, however, is not below the average, and there is a fair proportion of reproductive females. No time should be lost in instituting a system of inquests upon the cause of each infant death, and for this purpose native officers of greater intelligence than the existing Native Magistrates should, I think, be temporarily attached to the province.

BUA has a low birth-rate (30), and a death-rate of 65 per mille. 90 per cent. of the children born died under one year of age. There was a still-birth rate of 10 per cent., and the proportion of children and of reproductive females are both low.

The other provinces of Vanualevu—CAKAUDROVE and MACUATA—show even a worse state of vitality. The birth-rates have fallen to 27 and 26 per mille. The death-rates are 56 and 51. The still-birth rates are 10 per cent. The proportion of children, and therefore the age-constitution, is very low, and there is a small proportion of reproductive women.

For some unexplained cause, the females in the three last-named provinces seem to be unequal to the work of gestation, or of bearing children healthy enough to resist the ordinary diseases of childhood. In Bua, at any rate, there is much in their favour: food is plentiful, and during the last year most of the houses in the province have been rebuilt. It is true that both the language and the physique of these three provinces show strong Polynesian affinities, but their low vitality cannot be attributed to this, since Lau, which is even more markedly hybrid, is not so deficient in vitality.

It is to be feared that a low birth-rate—the problem that has long occupied the attention of the French Government without result—is beyond the power of any Government to remedy, for the causes lie deep-rooted in the physical nature of the race. I would, however, recommend that evidence be obtained from these three provinces upon the following points;—

- (1) The average age at which either sex marry;
- (2) The average number of children born to each marriage, and at what period after marriage;
- (3) The proportion of marriages in which the parties are not allowed to cohabit immediately after marriage;
- (4) The illegitimate birth-rate;
- (5) The practice of abortion.

Evidence upon these points could be procured by the European Stipendiary Magistrates, who might assist the Native Magistrates to hold inquiries into every case of infant death and every case of still-birth. I have little doubt that many of the latter will be found to result from criminal interference with nature. Upon the evidence thus furnished remedial measures might be enforced by legislative enactment.

21. In examining the vital statistics of the native race with the view of discovering and remedying some predisposing cause for the decrease in population, one is met with contradictions and inconsistencies that show that it is not an external influence that has to be contended with. Against the often advanced theory that the people are decreasing on account of the communal system, we have the facts that Yasawa, Kadavu,

Kadavu, Nadroga, and the two Colo provinces, in which communal institutions are the most deeply rooted, are decreasing less than Lau, in which property is now held individually; that Tonga in which communal institutions have been abolished altogether is decreasing even more rapidly than Fiji; and that Wallis Island and Futuna in which to communal institutions has been added a severe form of clerical despotism, are,—if the Roman Catholic Missionaries are to be believed,—annually increasing. Those again who argue that the rule of the chiefs has affected the vitality must explain the fact that Yacata, an island for years paying direct and rather heavy tribute to Roko Tui Cakaudrove, and in periodical want of food, has been steadily increasing. (Among a population of 108, there has in ten years been a net increase of 18). When we would accuse the practice of intermarriage among relations, or what is known to pastoralists as ‘breeding in-and-in,’ we are confronted with the fact that in Ogea, an island of 132 inhabitants, no one has married off the island for years, and yet there is an annual increase. That sexual immorality of young girls cannot but have a deleterious effect upon their reproductive powers is certain, and yet in Moala, an island notorious for loose morality among the women, and for a high rate of illegitimate births the population increased even in 1891. There is nothing in the social condition of Koro to separate it from other islands in Lomaiviti, and yet, while Gau and Ovalau showed an extraordinary mortality, both districts in Koro had an increase. I leave these facts to be reconciled by others with the various theories to which they form exceptions.

22. To raise the Fijians from the apathy they display towards their children and sick, the efforts of the Medical Department through the native medical practitioners, of the Mission through their native agents, and of the Native Department, and the Stipendiary Magistrates, have been long directed. Though I have no reliable data, I believe that the mission teachers have, as a rule, larger families than the natives round them, but on the other hand it is stated that the mission institutions have formed no exception to the rates of excessive mortality. *Na Mata*, the native newspaper, is publishing a series of articles on hygiene, and an almanac intended to hang in every house, and containing simple rules for the treatment of the more common diseases, is now in the press. A handbook on the laws of health in Fijian is also in course of preparation, and it is proposed to print instructions for the management of children on cards to hang in every house. But unfortunately advice is not sufficient. The Bose Vakaturaga held in May last recommended that inquests should be held in every case of infant death and still-birth, and adequate penalties be inflicted upon persons guilty of neglect, and of attempts to procure abortion, and I respectfully submit that no time should be lost in issuing the necessary instructions to native magistrates. These inquests, besides awakening Fijian mothers to a sense of their responsibilities, may furnish evidence upon which remedial measures can be founded.

23. Any report upon the Vital Statistics of the natives would be incomplete without some remarks upon their material prosperity in its bearing upon the vitality. This has a special interest in the case of the Fijians since there seems to be a popular delusion that their low vitality is accompanied with degradation and poverty, the result of the ancient communal system in which they are still permitted to live. The fact is generally lost sight of that the Fijian is one of the few communities under British rule in which every member has land more than sufficient for his needs; that he is in fact a peasant land owner, and that poverty and want in the European sense are unknown to him, inasmuch as he can, even in times of scarcity, obtain food sufficient for his physical needs.

24. In estimating the average wealth of natives in various parts of the Colony I have purposely omitted to count the amounts paid into the Treasury and refunded to the natives as surplus taxes—a sum that exceeded in 1891 £9,000, the natives having paid in produce an aggregate sum of £29,747 11s. 2d.* The greater part of this would not be earned at all were it not for the assistance and supervision of the Government.

But while I shall confine myself to an estimate of the wealth spontaneously produced by the natives, it is worth noting the steady increase in purchasing power due to the surplus taxes during the last few years.

Statement of surplus taxes refunded to the natives 1877–92.

	£	s.	d.
1877	940	6	8
1878	2,737	14	6
1879	4,265	3	1
1880	1,528	13	10
1881	1,339	3	9
1882	3,541	8	6
1883	5,673	1	7
1884	4,342	1	1
1885	4,975	15	1
1886	1,373	3	7
1887	2,300	19	1
1888	7,238	10	9
1889	5,152	5	8
1890	4,388	4	1
1891	9,146	8	9
1892	9,986	6	5†
Total, 16 years ...	68,929	6	5

The

* Since this report was written the returns for 1892 have shown the natives to have paid in produce in 1892, an aggregate sum of £30,226 6s. 5d., of which £9,986 6s. 5d. was returned to them, £500 being paid as Hospital Fees, and £19,740 as Assessed Taxes.

† Approximate. Received since report was written.

The loss of this sum annually distributed which the natives now count upon and which they could raise in no other way, would be severely felt not only by them but by a number of small storekeepers partially dependent on it, while the trade of the Colony would be so much the poorer; for the natives lack the powers of combination necessary for the larger and more profitable agricultural ventures, such as sugar-growing, except with the assistance of Government.

As an instance of the increased purchasing power of the natives, the amount spent annually in the purchase and repairs of boats and vessels may be quoted.

1889...	...	...	£3,285
1890...	...	...	4,451
1891...	...	...	4,816

25. In estimating the property owned by each head of family (*yavusa* or *batiniloro*) in Fiji, I adopt the method used by writers on village communities in India. For convenience in estimating and comparing the resources of natives of different provinces the *yavusa* must be taken as the unit, for the young Fijian until he marries, has no independent existence, but lives with, and to some extent at the expense of his relations.

ESTIMATE OF WEALTH OF HOUSEHOLDERS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COLONY.

Province.	Personal Property.								Annual Income.							Remarks.	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total.	Value of native food grown and consumed by family annually.	Net earnings of plantation, exclusive of tax produce.	Cocoanuts (copra) per annum, exclusive of tax produce.	Share of rent from land leased.	Other income, wages, &c. sale of produce, &c.	Value of food grown for feasts and entertainment of strangers.		Total.
Sera (Deuba) ...	£ s. d. 30 0 0	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 30 0 0	£ s. d. 20 0 0	£ s. d. 30 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 26 0 0	£ s. d. 140 0 0	£ s. d. 284 0 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 250 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 266 0 0
Naitasiri (Navuso) ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 2 10 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 10 0 0	£ s. d. 50 0 0	£ s. d. 76 0 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 150 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 174 10 0
Lomaiviti (Moturiki) ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 2 10 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 4 10 0	£ s. d. 10 0 0	£ s. d. 31 10 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 30 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 54 0 0
Lau (Vannabalavu) ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 7 0 0	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 31 0 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 12 0 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 37 10 0
Yasawa ...	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 11 10 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 25 0 0
Kadavu ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 15 10 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 7 0 0	£ s. d. 32 0 0
Nadroga ...	£ s. d. 2 10 0	£ s. d. 0 3 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 11 8 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 1 5 0	£ s. d. 4 0 0	£ s. d. 23 15 0	
Natewa Bay ...	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 0 4 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 2 0 0	£ s. d. 0 10 0	£ s. d. 7 14 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 22 10 0	
Macuata ...	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 0 5 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	£ s. d. 0 15 0	£ s. d. 6 0 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 20 5 0	£ s. d. 18 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 1 0 0	£ s. d. 5 0 0	£ s. d. 25 0 0	
																	Not including Labasa District.

* These natives live on European purchased food.

† Consumed.

26. The accompanying return contains an estimate of the personal property and annual income of families in different parts of the Colony, the income being reckoned not only as the money received but also as the money value of the native produce grown and consumed by each family. The following notes will explain each column of the return:—

(1) *Value of House*.—The cost of building a native house of the size in common use in each province, if paid for by an European—never less than £1 for each fathom of length. The natives of Deuba and the richer districts have doors and glass windows.

(2) *Utensils*.—Cooking pots (iron and clay), buckets, crockery, axes, knives, spades, &c.

(3) *Mats*.—The value of mats is from 2s. to 10s. each. Mats from Yasawa, Cikobia, Ono, Samoa, and Rotuma are worth considerably more, according to quality and size.

(4) *Clothing*.—The money spent in clothes by the poorest Fijian is not less than 7s. per annum.

(5) *European Furniture*.—In the poorer districts the only European furniture possessed by Fijians is iron boxes, wooden chests, and looking-glasses. The richer natives have chests of drawers and sometimes a table and chairs.

(6) *Native Furniture*.—This includes native property stored away for use in *solevus*, funerals, &c.

(7) *Pigs, Fowls, Goats, and Cattle*.

(8) *Share in Boat*.—This includes the share subscribed for the purchase of the village, district, or provincial vessel.

(9) *The Value of the Food annually Grown and Consumed by a Household*.—The average cost of rationing an adult Fijian upon native food throughout the year in all parts of the Colony is at least 4d. per diem; in Rewa, Lomaiviti, and Lau between 5d. and 6d. This is without counting pork or fish. The cheapness of food in the yam season is fully compensated for by the increased price in times of scarcity. To guard against over-estimation I have taken 4d. per diem, or £6 1s. 8d. per annum, as the cost of rationing each adult. A household would average three adults, counting two children as one adult, and, therefore the amount each householder would pay for the maintenance of his family, if he did not grow the food, would be £18 5s., or in round figures £18. This is probably a very low estimate.

(10) *Net Earnings of Plantation*.—This does not include the money refunded by the Government on account of surplus produce after the district assessment has been paid. It is limited to the earnings of banana plantations in Serua and Rewa.

(11) *Cocoanuts (Copra)*.—This is an estimate of the value of the copra at the disposal of the household after the tax in produce has been paid, but it does not include the money refunded by the Government on account of copra over and above the amount required for the assessment.

(13)—This is derived, in Rewa, Lomaiviti, and Ba, from produce sold in the towns, and from the same source, in a lesser degree, in other provinces; but it also includes the property received in *solevu*, and purchased by articles manufactured by the household and given in exchange.

(14)—This is an estimate of the value of the food, &c., contributed by the household towards the feasts given to strangers on the occasion of the Provincial and District Councils, and at other times. Taking the average value of pigs to be 10s., the food consumed at one of these Councils may be valued at from £70 to £100.

27. The value and extent of the land owned by each tribe varies so much that only the most general average can be arrived at. There are in the Colony 4,953,920 acres, of which 413,440 have been granted to Europeans. The remainder—4,540,480 acres—is the property of natives. Taking the native population to be 107,000, it would appear that every native man, woman, and child owns 42 acres. There were, at the taking of the Census last year, 24,589 males at the adult and aged periods of life, the majority of whom are heads of families. Each of these, if the land were equally divided, would own 180 acres.

28. It will thus be seen that vitality does not coincide with material prosperity, nor with the productiveness of the soil which means prosperity. Thus Yasawa, Nadroga, and Kadavu—provinces with a comparatively high vitality—have a low average of wealth; while Naitasiri, Lomaiviti, and Lau show a low vitality in spite of their greater material advantages: nor does social comfort seem to influence the infantile mortality, for Serua and Cakaudrove show respectively an infantile death-rate of 82 and 86 per cent.

29. Of the two sources of income, earned and unearned, the latter, as might be expected, has a demoralising rather than a civilising effect. The natives of Naitasiri and the Rewa districts of Tailevu derive large sums annually from rents, and they are in consequence becoming year by year more prone to adopt the vices of the Indian coolies who live among them, without their two virtues—thrift and industry. The natives of Deuba, on the other hand, who enjoy considerable incomes from banana plantations established by their own industry, though they have lost their hospitality and some other of the better features of the old Fijian character, and have learnt gambling from the Indians, are hardworking and law-abiding. Their development from improvident and ignorant natives into keen farmers, employing labourers of their own, within the short space of five years, is very curious. The trading instinct of the natives, especially those in the vicinity of the towns, is being rapidly developed; the returns of the native market in Suva show that competition is daily becoming keener.

30. It is thus evident that the Fijian earns, without effort and without competition, more than sufficient for his needs, and has resources from which he can raise money to gratify every passing whim. The wealth at his command can only be acquired by the English agricultural labourer after hard and unremitting toil; and in being a landowner, and having no need for taking thought for the morrow, he enjoys a higher degree of material comfort than the labouring classes in any European country.

I have, &c.,

B. H. THOMSON.

Minute by the Assistant Colonial Secretary.

His Excellency,

Respectfully submitted with the Returns for the years 1890 and 1891 and Mr. Thomson's Report thereon.

2. The Census of the Native Population has been taken three times since the Cession of the Colony, and the following results have been obtained :—

Year—			1879.	1881.	1891.
Children	{ Male	... ..	17,962	20,873	18,292
	{ Female	... ..	14,699	16,305	16,172
Youths	{ Male	... ..	13,642	12,738	11,850
	{ Female	... ..	10,802	8,760	6,957
Adults...	{ Male	... ..	17,922	18,605	18,975
	{ Female	... ..	17,323	19,520	18,186
Aged ...	{ Male	... ..	7,967	8,683	7,328
	{ Female	... ..	8,607	9,264	8,040
Total	{ Male	... ..	57,493	60,899	56,445
	{ Female...	... ..	51,431	53,849	49,355
Total			108,924	114,748	105,800

In 1879 the Native labourers employed on European plantations were not embraced in the enumeration, and are not included in the foregoing figures, but were estimated at about 3,000 souls. The figures for 1879 might thus be set down at 111,924.

3. The population by record, that is to say the numbers arrived at by taking the Census of 1891 as a basis and adding the births and deducting the deaths that have taken place between the date of that Census and 1st April, 1891, was found to be—

Males.	Females.	Total.
58,244	51,902	110,146

4. There have thus been four sets of figures given as the number of the Native Population, viz. :—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
(1) Census of 1879	57,493	51,431	108,924
Add Estimate of Native Labourers ...	3,000		111,924
(2) Census of 1881	60,899	53,849	114,748
(3) Census of 1891	56,445	49,355	105,800
(4) Population at date of Census of 1891 as computed by record with the Census of 1881 as a basis... ..	58,244	51,902	110,146
Loss of Population between the Census of 1881 and 1891 by enumeration	4,454	4,494	8,948
Loss of Population by computation from records	2,655	1,947	4,602
The Census Returns show a greater de- crease than the Returns computed from the records by	1,799	2,547	4,346

5. Now the question is, Which is the correct statement of the loss: has it amounted to 8,948 during the decade or to 4,602? I believe that the latter figures are a fairly close approximation of the decrease. There were two elements of unreliability in the Census of 1891. The first is the shipping. People on board the shipping in Suva and Levuka were duly enumerated, but in going through the returns I cannot find any reference to, or mention of, the enumeration of persons who belonged to vessels at sea, or at anchor, on the night of the 5th April, 1891. When it is remembered that there were 383 interinsular vessels afloat at the end of 1890, 246 of which were owned by natives, it is evident that there is room here for some under-enumeration.

If they could possibly avoid it, natives would not return the numbers of crews which did not belong to their own towns, fearing that the increased numbers would affect their taxation.

The second element is that mentioned by Mr. Thomson, where, in respect of certain towns, the census forms were exactly filled up to the end, the population of the towns concerned being returned at 81 souls each—the number of spaces contained in the form.

I have now received an account from each of those towns whose population numbered 81 or 162.

In twenty-two of the towns the original returns are certified to be correct, but thirty-four towns have added names numbering in the aggregate 333, which had been omitted from the original returns. This number is made up of the following elements :—

Aged

Aged ...	{	Males ...	...	11
		Females	...	18
Adult ...	{	Males ...	...	47
		Females	...	35
Youths	{	Males ...	...	37
		Females	...	12
Children	{	Males ...	...	58
		Females	...	115
Total ...				<hr/> 333

One town (a leper town consisting of 14 souls) had been omitted altogether in the enumeration. The tendency appears to have been to omit infant females, these being presumably supposed to be of least account, or, from a native point of view, not worth the trouble of enumeration.

The Census in many places appears to have been taken from memory. A few men with good memory are called into the chief's house, and, beginning with the chief, go down the scale of importance until they arrive at the youngest female in the town. Probably the Census is as correctly given in that way as in any other.

Some of the District Scribes appear to have been perfunctory in the work of the Census, taking the names of the people on loose sheets of paper and afterwards filling up the returns therefrom, in some instances having in the meantime lost a portion of the papers. These men have been dealt with in cases where such conduct has come to light.

6. The following extract from the Report on the Annual Blue Book, is worthy of consideration, as the statistical returns of the Missions at work in the Colony are entitled to the greatest respect:—

“In 1881, when the native population was returned at 114,748 (the total population of the Colony being 127,486), the Ecclesiastical returns showed the following number of Church Adherents, viz. :—

Wesleyan Mission ...	...	102,736
Roman Catholic Mission ...	...	9,000
Total ...		111,736

being about 3,000 less than the enumerated native population.

“In 1891, when the enumerated native population amounts to 105,800 (the total population being 121,180), the Ecclesiastical returns show the adherents of the two Missions to be as follows :—

Wesleyan Mission ...	...	103,829
Roman Catholic Mission ...	...	10,402
Total ...		114,231

“These numbers have increased notwithstanding the apparent decrease of population. But the Ecclesiastical returns embrace a portion of the non-Fijian population of the Colony. Let it be conceded that the following proportions of the non-Fijian population are so included :—

Europeans (say) ...	...	1,000
Half-castes (all) ...	...	1,076
Indians (say) ...	...	100
Polynesians (say) ...	...	600
Rotumans (all) ...	...	2,219
Others (all) ...	...	314
Total ...		5,309

“The foregoing allowance is an ample one, and, if the number thus obtained be deducted from the total number of Wesleyan and Roman Catholic adherents in the Colony, the number of native Fijian Church adherents should be arrived at.

The total number of Church Adherents is ...	...	114,231
Deduct the non-Fijian element ...	...	5,309

Number of Fijian adherents ... 108,922

“This number is in excess of the Fijian population returned at the Census by 3,122.

“Hence it would appear that either the Ecclesiastical returns or the Census returns are in error to at least that extent.”

7. The following statement is designed to show—

- (1) Number of Native *tauveis* in each province at Census of 1891 ;
- (2) Number of Native labourers in each province at Census of 1891 ;
- (3) Total number of Natives in each province at Census of 1891 ;
- (4) Native population according to the records kept from the Census of 1881, allowing for all births and deaths up to 31st March, 1891 ;
- (5) Excess of Census over Estimated Population ;
- (6) Excess of Estimated Population over the number ascertained by Census.

COLONY OF FIJI.

CENSUS OF THE NATIVE POPULATION—APRIL, 1891.

*RETURN showing the Population of each Province as ascertained at the Census of April 1891, distinguishing between Natives resident in their towns and Native Labourers; also the Estimated Native Population at 1st April, 1891, computed from the Census Returns of 1881 and the Records of subsequent Births and Deaths.

Province.	Native Population according to the Census of 1891.						Estimated Population at 1st April, 1891, computed from Census Returns of 1881 and the Records of subsequent Births and Deaths.			Excess of Census over Estimate of Population.			Excess of Estimated Population over the Number ascertained by Census.		
	Resident in Native Towns.			Native Labourers, Police Officers, &c.			Total.			Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.						
Ba.....	4,003	3,509	7,512	65	16	81	4,068	3,525	7,593	4,414	3,797	8,211	346	272	618
Yasawa.....	1,668	1,498	3,166	...	...	...	1,668	1,498	3,166	1,608	1,535	3,143	...	37	...
Bua.....	2,807	2,592	5,399	96	58	154	2,903	2,650	5,553	3,220	2,843	6,063	317	193	510
Cakaudrove.....	5,162	4,600	9,762	473	61	534	5,635	4,661	10,296	6,050	5,221	11,271	415	560	975
Kadavu.....	3,700	3,410	7,110	7	18	25	3,707	3,428	7,135	3,871	3,671	7,542	164	243	407
Naitasiri.....	1,122	1,039	2,161	561	2	563	1,683	1,011	2,724	1,214	1,097	2,341	...	56	...
Lau.....	3,591	3,154	6,748	115	21	136	3,709	3,175	6,884	3,884	3,385	7,299	175	210	385
Lomaiviti.....	3,210	2,959	6,169	160	93	253	3,370	3,052	6,422	4,036	3,224	7,260	666	172	838
Macuata.....	3,011	2,691	5,702	50	6	56	3,061	2,697	5,758	3,211	2,796	6,007	150	99	249
Nadroga.....	2,381	2,146	4,527	2	2	4	2,383	2,148	4,531	2,645	2,417	5,062	262	269	531
Namosi.....	622	581	1,203	...	...	...	622	581	1,203	689	643	1,332	67	62	129
Ra.....	5,383	4,944	10,327	130	21	151	5,513	4,965	10,478	5,768	5,102	10,870	255	137	392
Rewa.....	2,683	2,355	5,038	436	104	540	3,119	2,459	5,578	2,800	2,442	5,242	319	17	...
Tailevu.....	6,811	5,985	12,796	197	99	296	7,008	6,084	13,092	7,081	6,411	13,492	...	...	...
Colo West.....	3,173	3,006	6,179	...	2	2	3,173	3,008	6,181	3,110	2,958	6,068	73	327	400
Colo East.....	3,461	3,297	6,758	...	...	...	3,461	3,297	6,758	3,451	3,270	6,721	...	...	...
Serua.....	1,154	1,051	2,205	208	35	243	1,362	1,086	2,448	1,162	1,090	2,252	...	4	...
Total.....	53,945	48,817	102,762	2,500	538	3,038	56,445	49,355	105,800	58,214	51,902	110,146	2,890	2,641	5,434
Deduct										1,091	94	1,088	1,091	94	1,088
Net Excess of Estimate										1,779	2,547	4,346	1,779	2,547	4,346

* No account is here taken of the 333 souls not enumerated in the original Census of 1891.

8. From this it would appear that the small province of Yasawa, in which there are no native labourers, but which supplies numbers of labourers to plantations in other provinces, shows by the Census a greater population than the records indicate by 23. This may arise from labourers from Yasawa having been at work in other provinces when the Census of 1881 was taken.

The province of Naitasiri, where the Census shows an increase of 383 over the population shown by record, owes this position to the fact that there were no fewer than 563 native labourers in that province when the Census of 1891 was taken. The number was doubtless much less in 1881.

Similarly in Rewa province, where the Census gives 336 more of a population than the records, there is found to have been 540 native labourers at the date of the Census of 1891. The same thing applies to the province of Serua, where there were 243 labourers at the Census of 1891, and where the Census revealed a greater population than the records by 196.

There is an increase, as between the enumerated and the estimated population, of 113 souls in Colo West and 37 in Colo East. These are provinces not affected by the factor of native labour. The probability is that the difference in these cases arises through the return to Colo of natives who were in other provinces at the date of the Census of 1881.

A peculiar feature of the return is the great decrease of females as compared with that of males shown by the Census return for the province of Tailevu. This may be an error of enumeration due to the tendency of natives to ignore female children.

A very heavy decrease appears in the Census returns of Cakaudrove, as compared with the estimate. This is doubtless due to the fact that a large number of labourers resident in other provinces are natives of Cakaudrove; and, so far as females are concerned, is probably owing to defective enumeration.

The discrepancy in the province of Lomaiviti is accounted for to some extent by the fact that in 1881, the principal prison and police establishments were situate in that province, and are now situate in Suva.

The disparity between the Census returns and the Ecclesiastical returns has been shown to be at least 3,122.

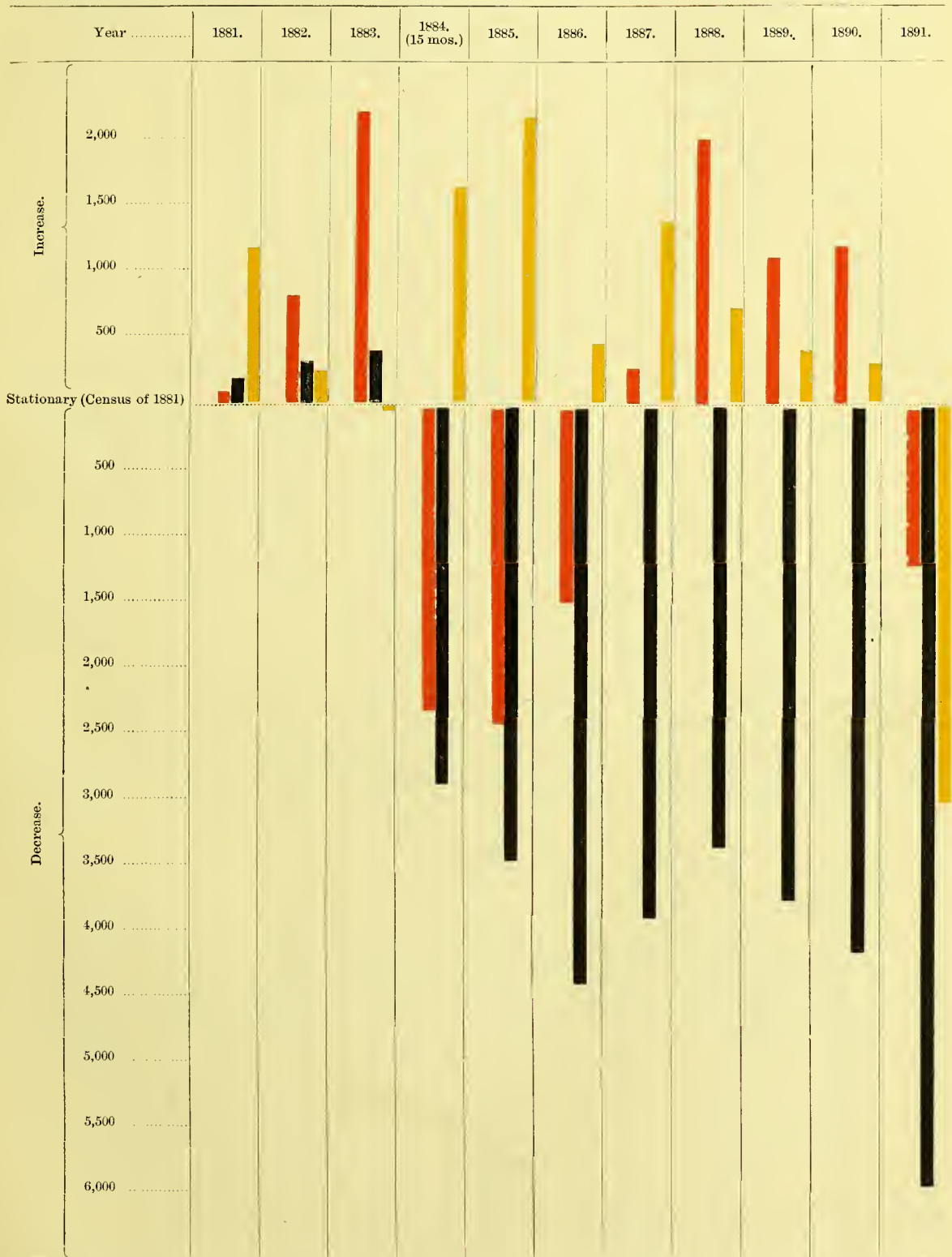
The disparity between the Census returns and the Estimate is 4,346. In view of the very liberal allowance made in deducting the non-Fijian portion of the community from the Ecclesiastical returns, it may be said that the two sets of figures practically agree in the extent to which they differ from the result of the Census of 1891.

9. I have prepared a diagram showing comparatively the fluctuation from year to year of (1) The population as computed from records of Births and Deaths; (2) The Day Scholars in the schools of the Wesleyan Mission; (3) The Church Adherents of the Wesleyan Mission:—

DIAGRAM showing the fluctuation of—

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| (1) <i>The Population</i>
as shown by the Annual State-
ment of Births and Deaths | } | — |
| (2) <i>Church Adherents</i>
(Wesleyan Mission) | } | — |
| (3) <i>Day Scholars</i>
(Wesleyan Mission) | } | — |

during the decade between the Census of 1881 and that of 1891.



From

From this diagram it appears that the attendance of day scholars has not at any time until the end of 1890 sunk below the point with which the period commenced.

In 1891 it sank rapidly, probably following the great fall of population in 1884.

The population, on the other hand, has not risen to the point of commencement since the end of the year 1883, when the increase of three years was swallowed up in the loss of a few months. The increase of the years 1887 and 1888 is hardly observable in the decreases of the preceding and succeeding years.

The position which the church adherents maintain throughout the decade, gives hope that the computation by record of the decrease of the population is not at fault.

The decrease of The Population shown in the column headed "1891," is the decrease as computed by record, not the figures as ascertained by the Census; and its position alongside of the decrease shown in Day Scholars and Church Adherents increases faith in the approximate accuracy of the Vital Statistics, especially as there is reason to believe that the numbers given as the strength of Day Scholars and Church Adherents for the year 1891 have been arrived at after a purging of the rolls.

10. The actual figures (extracted from the returns furnished in the Annual Blue Book) of the Church Adherents and Day Scholars are for the past twelve years as follows:

They do not refer exclusively to Fijians, but the proportion of other nationalities is not great enough to affect the comparison of the fluctuations.

STATEMENT showing the number of Adherents of the Wesleyan Mission Church in Fiji, and the number of Day Scholars as returned for each year from 1880 to 1891 inclusive.

		Adherents.		Day Scholars.
1880	.....	102,639	.....	40,323
1881	.....	102,736	.....	41,554
1882	.....	103,526	.....	40,563
1883	.....	104,866	.....	40,313
1884	.....	100,331	.....	41,929
1885	.....	100,154	.....	42,698
1886	.....	101,150	.....	40,718
1887	.....	102,891	.....	41,724
1888	.....	104,585	.....	41,077
1889	.....	103,775	.....	40,667
1890	.....	103,829	.....	40,574
1891	.....	101,355	.....	37,175

11. In view of the foregoing facts, I think it may be assumed that the decrease during the decade from April 1881 to April 1891 has been nearer 4,062 (the decrease as ascertained by computation from the returns of births and deaths) than 8,948 (the decrease shown by a comparison of the two enumerations).

12. The next question that arises is, What was the actual population at the date of the Census of 1891? This, however, is a question to which no definite answer can be given.

To consider the matter it will be necessary for a moment to return to the Census of the year 1879. That enumeration indicated that the number of the population was—

Males.		Females.		Total.
57,493	...	51,431	.....	108,924

but it is stated in the returns that these figures do not include the natives who were employed as labourers on the plantations of Europeans. These were estimated at "about 3,000 souls." The number of native labourers according to the Census of 1891 was 3,038 (practically the same number as in 1879), and consisted of 2,500 males and 538 females (*vide* return given under paragraph 7).^{*} It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the native labourers in 1879 numbered 2,500 males and 500 females. The total population in 1879 would thus have been—

	Males.		Females.		Total.
The population in 1881 (two years later) was ascertained to be	59,993	...	51,931	.....	111,924
	60,899	...	53,849	.....	114,748
Being an increase of	906	...	1,918	.....	2,824

According to the Census of 1881 there were in the Colony 88.4 females to every 100 males among the native population. The increase between 1879 and 1881 would appear from the foregoing figures to have been at the rate of 211 females to every 100 males, which I think plainly indicates that one of the enumerations was incorrect.

If the enumeration of 1881 be now compared with the enumeration of 1891, the following result is obtained:—

	Males.		Females.		Total.
Census of 1881...	60,899	...	53,849	.....	114,748
Census of 1891...	56,445	...	49,355	.....	105,800
Decrease	4,454	...	4,494	.....	8,948

Here there is a decrease at the rate of 100.9 females to every 100 males, while the proportion of the sexes in the population was 88 females per 100 males.

It

It is improbable, in fact impossible, that the actual decrease of females could have exceeded the actual decrease of males, just as it was impossible that the increase between 1879 and 1881 should have been in the proportion of 211 females to the 100 males. All statistics have tended to show that the decrease-rate of females was less than the decrease-rate of males. It is shown by the table given at page 28 of my (printed) Report on the Vital Statistics of 1887, that while for the 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ years ending 31st December, 1887, the decrease rate of males was 5.49 per mille *of males*, the decrease rate of females was only 4.90 per mille *of females*. Nothing has occurred to, in any degree, disturb the proportions since that date. If at any time, while the proportion of females was equal to only 88 per centum of males, the decrease rate of females should have been equal to 101 per cent. of males, the circumstance would have been so patent as to at once claim attention; and in no case could such a decrease have gone on for ten years unobserved.

I cannot, therefore, believe that the female population has decreased by 4,494—equal to one-twelfth of the total female population—during the decade, as a comparison of the two enumerations would appear to indicate.

If, instead of comparing the two enumerations, an examination be made of the records of births and deaths for the decade, the result is found to be a decrease of—

Males.	Females.	Total.
2,655	1,947	4,602

or at the rate of 73.3 females to every 100 males.

It has been shown that when the Census of 1879 is compared with that of 1881, and when the Census of 1881 is compared with that of 1891, there is an apparent discrepancy in the increase and decrease rate of the female population.

But when the Census of 1879 is compared with that of 1891, the following result is obtained:—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Census of 1879 (not including native labourers)...	57,493	51,431	108,924
Census of 1891 (deducting native labourers) ...	53,945	48,817	102,762
Decrease ...	3,548	2,614	6,162

This decrease is at the rate of 73.6 females to every 100 males. If the native labourers be added to both years, the result is of course practically the same. This decrease-rate of females corresponds very closely with that shown by the records of the decade, which gave the decrease-rate of females at 73.3 per 100 males.

It has been thought that there was a disposition among the natives to disregard their female children in compiling the returns of their numbers. A comparison of the elements of the Census of 1881 with that of 1891 gives the following result:—

	Census 1881.	Census 1891.	Increase.	Decrease.
Children { Male ...	20,873	18,292	.....	2,581
{ Female ...	16,305	16,172	.....	133
Youths { Male ...	12,738	11,850	.....	888
{ Female ...	8,760	6,957	.....	1,803
Adults... { Male ...	18,605	18,975	370	.....
{ Female ...	19,520	18,186	.....	1,334
Aged ... { Male ...	8,683	7,328	.....	1,355
{ Female ...	9,264	8,040	.....	1,224
Total ...	114,748	105,800	370	9,948
Net Decrease ...				8,948

From the foregoing table it will be seen that the number of female children in 1891 compares very favourably with the number returned in 1881.

The number of children returned in the Census of 1891 compares still more favourably with the enumeration of 1879, as it shows an increase of Male Children, 209; Females, 1,356; Total, 1,565. These two facts would appear to indicate that the tendency to ignore female children which existed at the date of previous enumerations did not exist to any serious extent in 1891, notwithstanding the circumstance mentioned in paragraph 5 hereof.

On the whole, therefore, I incline to think that the Census of 1891 is the most correct that has been taken.

The only records that I can obtain on the subject indicate that there was, between 1879 and 1881, an actual increase of population amounting to 400. That would give an estimated population at the date of the Census of 1881 of...

... 112,324
instead of ... 114,748 as returned at the Census,

or less by ... 2,424

The loss of population by computation since the Census of 1881 has been 4,602. This number deducted from the 112,324 estimated to exist at the date of the Census of 1881 would indicate a population at April, 1891, of 107,722 as compared with the enumeration of 105,800; and I am of opinion that the population

population at 1st April, 1891, was probably somewhere between those two numbers—that is to say, the numbers returned at the Census were short of the actual population by a thousand or more.

13. On the point of age-constitution I have taken the following figures for purposes of comparison from the Vital Statistics of New South Wales and Victoria.

In 1881 the age-constitution of the population of New South Wales was said to approach as nearly as might be to what should theoretically be found in a perfect community.

I have noted hereunder the proportions in question, adding those that obtained in Fiji at the Census of 1881 and 1891 (*vide* paragraph 17 of Mr. Thomson's minute), and also the age-constitution of Yasawa as ascertained at the Census of 1891. Yasawa is the only province of Fiji that has had an absolute and continuous increase of population throughout the decade. The figures are as follow :—

Age.	New South Wales.	Fiji, 1881.	Fiji, 1891.	Yasawa, 1891.
0—15	39·8	32·4	33·32	40·5
15—25	19·9	18·74	17·54	20·4
25—50	30·4	33·23	34·29	29·4
Reproductive Ages ...	50·3	51·97	51·83	49·8
50 and over ...	10	15·64	14·85	9·7

The weakness of the age-constitution among the native population lies in the paucity of their numbers at the period of 0—15, a deficiency caused by the abnormal death-rate of infants, which will of course tell on later generations as time advances. It will be observed that, owing probably to a better enumeration of young children having been obtained in 1891, the proportion at the lowest age (0—15) shows an increase in that year. The increase there obtained is, however, lost at the next stage (15—25, represented in Fiji by the stage "Youths"). One of the most unsatisfactory features of the whole question is the continued decrease in the number of "Youths" returned at the past Census. In 1879, "Youths" numbered 24,444. At the Census of 1881 the number was 21,498. At the Census of 1891 it was reduced to 18,807, a decrease which, if the figures are to be relied on, indicates in rather a marked manner that children are not being reared to take the place of the youths who are passing over to the "Adult" stage.

14. It is interesting to review the age-constitution of Yasawa as set forth in the foregoing table. Here it will be found that the age-constitution is even more theoretically perfect than it was according to the New South Wales table. If the conditions prevailing in Yasawa could be realised throughout the Colony, the population might be regarded as established. The Yasawa Group consists of a number of small islands, not much frequented by Europeans. The cocoanut is extensively grown there, and probably together with fish enters pretty largely into the food supply of the people.* The people themselves are more active than the Fijians generally, and give one the idea that they have had to work somewhat more for the means of subsistence.

15. A reference to paragraph 17 of Mr. Thomson's minute will show that the provinces that have suffered the greatest proportionate decrease—Cakaudrove, Macuata, and Bua—show the lowest proportion of population at the age "0—15" (children).

16. The proportion of the population living at reproductive ages throughout the Colony is high, and might be regarded as satisfactory if its prominent position had not been attained by the diminution of the proportion of children. As it is, this high proportion would not be without its effect if the material of which it is composed were capable of fulfilling its responsibilities.

17. It appears also that, consequent doubtless on the deficiency of children, the strength of the population at the lower reproductive ages is falling off and going over to the higher ages.

18. The proportion of females at the reproductive ages to females living is as follows in the countries mentioned below, viz. :—

England and Wales	...	...	...	45·07
Victoria	...	...	...	45·40
South Australia	...	...	...	45·61
Fiji, 1881	...	...	...	52·05
Fiji, 1891	...	...	...	50·07

In this respect the native population shows no deficiency.

19. The proportionate birth-rate of females as compared with males has also improved. For the $6\frac{3}{4}$ years to the end of December, 1887 (*vide* Report), 893 females were born per 1,000 males. For the $10\frac{3}{4}$ years to the end of December, 1891, there were 901 females born per 1,000 males. The increase is not a great one, but may indicate future possibilities. It has been supposed that the tendency to bear an undue proportion of male children, to which the native population seems predisposed, is owing to the great number of cases in which elderly men are married to young women. The improvement in the proportionate birth-rate of females is doubly a matter for congratulation if it be due to an alteration in that respect, as such marriages are not usually of choice so far as the female is concerned.

20. The number of deaths per thousand births is fewer for the $10\frac{3}{4}$ years ending with the Census of 1891 than for the $6\frac{3}{4}$ years ending December 1887. For the latter period the number of deaths per thousand

* I have been informed by Mr. Thomson, who has considerable knowledge of the Yasawas, having been Magistrate of the district for some years, that the people live for the most part on fish and fruit, consisting of cocoanuts, breadfruit, and plantains,—the latter for about one-half of the year in the form of *madrai* (the fruit fermented in pits and eaten as bread after being baked). They subsist but to a comparatively slight extent on yams and other root food.

thousand births was 1,136; for the longer period it was 1,126, notwithstanding the fact that the death-rate of the year 1891 is the highest recorded, with the one exception of the year 1884. The high rate of 1884, it may be mentioned, was owing to an epidemic of Whooping-cough. That of 1891 was due in part to the epidemic of Influenza.

21. The decrease of the population, after the Census of 1881, commenced with the year 1884. The total decrease up to 31st December, 1884, represented a decrease of 760 per annum for the period from the date of the Census.

At the end of 1885 the total decrease represented 724 per annum.

..	1886	..	..	767	..
..	1887	..	..	588	..
..	1888	..	..	440	..
..	1889	..	..	443	..
..	1890	..	..	432	..
..	1891	..	..	537	..

If the race is to be saved, some means must be adopted, and that early, to stop the heavy drain on the population which the foregoing figures indicate.

22. Civilisation has been accustomed to hear of the decrease of aboriginal peoples, and to ascribe it to the habits of savage life, warfare, abuse of alcohol, interference with the liberty of the people, the confiscation of their lands, and kindred causes.

But in Fiji none of these causes obtain, and for the past ten and three-quarter years the population has decreased at the rate of something like 500 per annum. There is a good deal in favour of Mr. Thomson's contention that but for epidemics of European diseases—whooping-cough, dengue fever, and influenza—the population would maintain its position. But, even so, the people would not increase at any appreciable rate, and, as all communities, whether savage or civilised, are subject to epidemic diseases of one kind or another, the increase would be insufficient to make any headway. Paragraph 14 of Mr. Thomson's Report (which continues the figures given in paragraphs 53 and 55 of the printed Report on the Vital Statistics of 1887) shows that there is no doubt that the decrease of the population is due to the excessive mortality among children, and for the most part among children of one year of age and under. Various reasons have been given for this condition of things, and most of them are enumerated in paragraph 55 of the printed report; but the consensus of opinion appears to converge on the point that the Fijian woman is ill-suited, physically and mentally, both from cast of character and force of surroundings, to become the mother of a family.

23. Paragraph 15 of Mr. Thomson's Report, which shows that in some provinces the still-births are equal to 10·38 per cent. of the total births, indicates one phase of this lack of maternal suitability. It is to be noted that the four provinces where this unsatisfactory condition of things has its most marked existence are the same as those who attain a similar position at paragraph 63 of the Report on the Statistics of 1887, with this difference—that the proportion of still-births appears to have increased.

24. As affecting the stamina of the parents, it is alleged that in many instances the people are in-bred. I do not think this is such a serious factor in the calculation as it has by some observers been represented to be, but it is doubtless one the weight of which will increase in time, if time be given, and if matters remain in their present groove.

25. A point that affects both parent and child to a much greater extent is the food they eat. The staple food consists of yams, taro, breadfruit, sweet potatoes, manioc, arrowroot, and cocoanuts. Fish and shell-fish form the staple animal food. Pork, of which there is no scarcity, is usually eaten at feasts, and in a manner likely to confer more harm than benefit on the partaker. Except by natives who are engaged as labourers, policemen, &c., and by prisoners, cereal food is little used; and, although there is no doubt that more European food—tinued meats, bread, and rice—is purchased than heretofore, it makes way but slowly, and does not reach the people whom it would most benefit.

26. The birth-rate, as has been shown, is by no means a low one; it is in fact, taken as a whole, very high, and some see in this high birth-rate the elements of the unsatisfactory condition of the infant population.

27. When polygamy was the rule, the mother, it is said, was allowed some four or five years in which to rear her child before again assuming the duties of maternity. This principle held such a place in the estimation of the people that there still remains a very strong feeling against *dabe*, which may euphemistically be termed the bearing of children in too quick succession. The conduct of the husband in such cases is reprobated by public opinion, which holds that a child should be suckled for two or three years. This extended course of suckling is interfered with by *dabe*.

28. Among Europeans the suckling of children for such a length of time is unusual, and is by some medical authorities believed to be hurtful; but it must be remembered that the Fijian has no adequate substitute for the natural food of the child. Milk is not used by the natives, and the preparation of milk from the cocoanut is a troublesome process, and is moreover not always possible.

Under these circumstances the native mother doubtless does well to suckle her child up to the second or third year of its age; and, if this could always be done, it is probable that an increasing infant population would be the result.

29. A theory has been mentioned by Mr. Peat that graminivorous animals suckle their young for a much longer period than carnivorous animals do, and that the Fijians—who are a root-eating people, having but little animal food as a regular thing, and not using eggs or milk to any extent, if at all—occupy the position of the graminivorous animals as compared with the more omnivorous European, Indian, or African, whose children need not be suckled beyond their first year.

If it be granted that this is so, it would seem that the polygamous life which existed among the higher classes of Fijians was not ill-fitted, had other things been equal, for the rearing of Fijian children; and there is little doubt that in the monogamous household children are born at much closer intervals than was customary in the era of polygamy, whilst the standard of nourishment has remained stationary.

30. Thus a married woman has a child which, we shall say, ought to be nursed for two years to give it a fair grip of life, but it is now frequently the case that before the child has attained its sixth month the mother has again become *enciente*.

If she continue to suckle the first child until the next birth, as is often done, the low quality of the milk will probably result in so weakening the child that it is unable to assimilate the nutriment in the shape of native food supplied to it after the next child is born, and the too frequent consequence is death. Or the lacteal flow may cease on the second conception, or the mother may discontinue the suckling of her first child, whereupon she must hand-feed it on chewed yam and similar provender.

If it survive the dangers of diarrhœa and dysentery to which such a course of feeding renders it liable, it will probably grow up with less stamina than it should have. Moreover, the trouble of feeding two children is more than the ordinary Fijian woman can attend to for any length of time.

31. Many children die in consequence of the cessation of the lacteal flow, for which the native mother has no adequate substitute. Many are also physicked to death by *alewa vuku*—literally wise-women (doctresses).

32. Another important factor in swelling the death-rate of infants is the disease called *coko* (yaws). Dr. Pound and Dr. Daniels believe this to be the cause of the death of many young children. Native children take this disease as European children take, or till lately did take, measles and whooping-cough—as a matter of course. Natives prefer that their children should have the disease when young, but it is observed that those who do not contract it till they reach the age of four or five years survive, and feel little effect from it, while in the case of younger infants it frequently induces illnesses that end in death.

33. Fijian mothers have also been seen with an infant of a few weeks old cutting it all over in a creek on a cold day “to let the bad blood go out.” Such practices, however, are probably responsible for only a small fraction of the great mortality.

34. Add to the foregoing matters the fact that many native women have no wish to assume the duties of maternity, but every desire to escape from them; that they are so careless by nature as to be unable for any length of time to exert themselves in the interest of a child requiring attention; that many of them, having in early life interfered with nature to prevent the conception or birth of a child, are now perhaps incapable of bearing healthy children; and that numbers still continue to so interfere with nature—and some idea may be obtained of the material to be worked upon.

35. I have before mentioned that the polity of the natives has been interfered with as little as possible. They have been allowed a full measure of self-government. This feature has perhaps been carried to an extreme, with the result that natives have come to regard their own systems as absolutely better suited to their needs than any that can be given to them.

It was recognised that the social development of the natives could be best promoted in consonance with native methods, and every one who is at all conversant with native government will admit that those methods ought to be availed of to the full extent to which they are susceptible of expansion; while it must also be borne in mind that continuous progress is not a law of humanity.

The natives and native government have in certain respects advanced as far as is possible along native lines, and they must ultimately be lifted to another grade.

36. It appears to me that the main issue, in the first instance to be coped with, is the inability of the natives to rear their children, which inability I believe arises from (1) An insufficient or improper system of food supply; (2) Errors of ignorance and incapacity in nursing.

Fijians are far too conservative to change their food at a bidding; and the errors of nursing have been inveighed against for years without effect.

These difficulties therefore present a formidable front when an endeavour is made to deal with them by purely native methods.

37. The tendency of the age among civilised peoples is to educate the children of the people at the expense of the State.

It has also been seen that existence must come before education, and hence in many centres of population it has been deemed necessary at certain seasons to feed the children of the people as well as to educate them.

The clothing of the children is but a stage ahead of this, and will probably eventuate in due season. The State has already recognised its responsibilities in this respect by the establishment, and maintenance of, or partial support granted to Reformatories and Industrial Schools; although for the most part it is a work that has devolved on charitable associations. But it is a recognised duty of the community to maintain—in fact to rear—children where the parents of the children are unable, from poverty or other causes, to do so.

I would respectfully suggest that this principle should be applied as befits the necessities of the case, and that in Fiji the State should rear the children inasmuch as their parents cannot do it.

If this could be done, it would meet the exigencies of the situation, and need not necessarily entail any violation, but only an extension, of the principles of communism under which the natives live.

38. This suggestion may be said to involve the initiation of a system that could only be regarded as artificial; but it appears to me that the life of the Fijian race has reached an acute stage, where it requires temporary shelter and fostering care; and, after all, artificialness is but a relative quality, and is a reproach that has, in its time, been hurled against the use of almost all the appliances of the daily life of the present age.

39. The causes at work that prevent the parents of Fijian children from rearing their offspring may be more remote than such matters as poverty and vice, which in civilised communities are regarded as adequate reasons for the community's assuming the guardianship of the children born under such auspices; but they are no less potent in their effect, and at least equally beyond control.

Hence I think the community would be justified in assuming the guardianship of such children in the manner best calculated to meet and overthrow the evils following on their birth.

40. The question may here arise, If the native race cannot be saved but by such means, why should it be saved at all; why not allow it to die out if it resists all ordinary efforts to keep it alive?

If such a question have to be answered, it may be done in the following among other ways:—

- (1) The honour of the Government is concerned in the preservation of the race which has placed itself under British protection.
- (2) It might be asked in turn, Why not abolish Church Agencies, Prisons, Reformatories, and Temperance Institutions which exist in civilised communities, and allow the weak to attain Tophet in their own way? The principles that maintain such institutions are concerned also in the saving of a race of people.
- (3) The ultimate prosperity of Fiji must be achieved by the natives. The Europeans who acquire a competency do not remain in the country. Those who stay do so because they cannot afford to retire. In any case, such money as is made in the country by Europeans is taken out of it, if possible.

On the other hand, with an intelligent and numerous native community (which in time we hope to see the Fijians become), interspersed with European merchants and planters, the country would have the means of existence and expansion within itself, and would be better able to resist the evil effects of the incessant fluctuation in the prices of tropical produce, which frequently carry distress and difficulty to a purely European industrial community.

Mr. Thomson has shown in the case of the Deuba natives the commencement of native commercial industry.

If the prosperity of the country is to be achieved in the near future, the natives must be saved and must increase in numbers.

41. The next question is, How are the children to be reared by the State?

I would beg to say, in the first instance, that the births in Fiji among the native population number only some 4,000 per annum, and if the lives of those children, of whom at present nearly one-half die before they reach their first year, could be saved at a cost of £1 per head, I think the Treasury would have no cause to complain.

42. There are in the Colony sixteen provinces, with an average of ten buliships in each province, and an average of about nine small towns in each buliship.

There are altogether 1,398 towns. Of that number 1,096 towns have less than 100 of a population, many consisting of only 10 or 12 people, and the majority of from 30 to 50. Two hundred and seventy-four towns have a population of between 100 and 200, and twenty-eight towns have a population of over 200 souls.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Fijians have decreased by at least 4,062 souls during the last decade, the number of towns during that period has increased from 1,319 to 1,398. Between the years 1879 and 1881 they had also increased in number.

43. The following return will show in detail the particulars summarised above:—

TABLE showing the Number of Towns in each Province of the Colony according to the Census of 1891, showing also the Number of Towns according to the Census of 1881.

Province.	Number of Buliships.	Number of Towns with a population of			Total Number of Towns at Census of 1891.	Population of the Largest Town in the Province.	Total Number of Towns at Census of 1881.	
		Under 100.	Under 200.	Over 200.				
Ba ...	9	41	28	6	75	359	73	Boundaries of Province altered since 1881.
Yasawa ...	5	15	15	1	31	253	27	
Bua ...	9	83	10	...	93	188	94	
Cakaudrove ...	15	133	23	3	159	324	147	
Kadavu ...	8	76	21	...	97	186	89	
Naitasiri ...	3	17	9	...	26	162	77	
Lau ...	13	51	20	3	74	408	73	Boundaries altered.
Lomaiviti ...	11	69	15	1	85	304	84	
Macuata ...	13	85	10	1	96	294	100	
Nadroga ...	10	61	10	...	71	144	64	
Namosi ...	4	23	1	...	24	141	24	
Ra ...	13	132	24	1	157	209	126	Boundaries altered.
Rewa ...	8	32	16	3	51	283	45	
Tailevu ...	15	104	34	6	144	370	161	
Colo West ...	13	85	11	1	97	231	71	
Colo East ...	8	58	20	2	80	222	29	
Serua ...	5	31	7	...	38	200	35	
	162	1,096	274	28	1,398	...	1,319	

44. The tendency of the natives is to split off and separate into small parties, and it is generally found that small towns are centres of indolence and evil. Added to this, each small village requires its chief

chief (Turaga ni koro), its officer, its minister or teacher, and in other ways wastes as much administrative effort as a larger town would use.

The number of small towns renders their visitation by magistrates, ministers of religion, medical officers, and others, a matter of difficulty and of such infrequent occurrence as to be comparatively useless.

Moreover in a small village the principal curse of Fijian life—want of privacy, want of home life—is even more than usually in evidence.

It is but the other day that I observed a case where a man could not even talk to his wife about their obtaining a divorce, save in the hearing of the public, who, of course, carried tales.

The system of mutual espionage in these small communities is rampant, the great aim of a man's life being, as a rule, to get his neighbour into trouble with the courts—ecclesiastical or judicial—in connection with some carnal offence.

If a man should kill a fowl (which consequently never happens, unless in case of sickness or on the arrival of a visitor of distinction), his neighbours know of it, and drop in to partake of it, and the owner is probably unable to retain any portion of it as his own share. Life under such conditions presents no goal, and the stimulus to progress, or to even a moderate interest in improvement, is consequently lacking.

45. The reason of their tendency to split up into small divisions lies to a great extent in the fact that the communal unit in native affairs has hitherto been the *matagali*.

This system is the cause of much of the internal dissension that exists among Fijians. Administration would be greatly simplified if the town could be made the administrative unit.

On this point I take the liberty of citing the views of the Resident Commissioner of Colo East, an officer whose knowledge of native affairs is admittedly second to none in the Colony, as expressed on a recent occasion when this topic was under discussion :—

“On the morning of Saturday the 10th, before leaving, I had a rather long conversation with Buli Matailobau regarding taxes, and he protested that the power of the bulis had been diminished by the taking of native land boundaries: for that, whereas before, the bulis and chiefs could do practically as they pleased in land matters, and grew the taxes where they chose, now the *matagali* elders refused permission, and pretended to hold the land on the same tenure as white men.

“I pointed out to him that, though unable to deny the truth to some considerable extent, yet so far as this year's taxes of Nakorovatu village went, he had himself to blame, for that in April last at Nailega, at the close of the Provincial Council, I had told him he could take the best land for the taxes he could find belonging to people of that village, and that I would support him; also that he had kept away from me on our return to Vunidawa, and had not, as I had requested him, brought the heads of the *matagali* to me for the purpose of having explained to them their tenure of the land.

“I am of opinion that the time is approaching when the *matagali* will have to be abandoned as the unit of Government in native matters, and the township substituted.

“The theory as at present is perfect, but is in practice absurd, for the land is now in the hands of the few descendants who can trace their descent from the original occupiers, while the bulk of the population is landless owing to the way in which the people have become mixed up by wars and dissensions of all kinds.

“In many parts the finest blocks are owned by a very few individuals, while all the others about are *vulagis* (strangers) of some kind or other.

“It is probable the people would be more happy, and get their work better done, if the land were divided up into townships, each of one or two villages, with the boundaries well defined.

“It could be done on a settlement of twenty-five or fifty years, and the Village Council would every five years reallot the lands within the township, with an appeal to the Provincial Council. If such were ever decided on, it might be advisable to make the attempt in a single district.”

46. I have introduced the foregoing point because I believe that, if it should be found possible to bring it into force among the native community, the opportunity might be taken to effect also the concentration of towns, which I am about to suggest. Or, in any case, the two alterations might be introduced together.

47. It has been found among Fijians that the larger towns (with the exception, perhaps, of such a town as Bau, which is cramped on a small island) are the more healthy, and that the people of the large towns are more alive, more awake, more civilised, and more susceptible of improvement than the inhabitants of small villages.

48. For many reasons, therefore, but principally with the view of staying the decrease of population, I would suggest that steps should be taken to concentrate native towns by collecting the people of each buliship into one or two large towns. Let good houses be built in these towns with a fence round each to give at least the means of privacy. Let the houses be built as far apart as may be, up to, say, twenty yards. Only the usual number of officers should be appointed for such towns. And in each town let there be a lying-in hospital, with an Indian or Tokalau female attendant (individuals of either class can be found possessing a certain degree of expertness in the management of children). It should be the duty of the husband of the inmate, or, failing him, of the chief of the town, to see that proper food is supplied for the inmates of the hospital; and, in the absence of cattle, it should be the duty of the Government to supply the town hospital with tinned milk and similar requisites for nursing the inmates.

In this hospital a mother might be confined, and thereafter attended to, and after she became again fit to attend to her ordinary duties the child could be kept in hospital during the daytime and suitably fed.

It is during the mother's absence from home at work that native children frequently contract fatal illnesses, which would be prevented if the children were attended to in the town hospital. This might go on until the child was old enough and strong enough to take up its abode with the parents.

49. The work of the Indian or Tokalau nurses would require supervision, and for this purpose it would be necessary to have a staff of European lady nurses—say one in each province—who could visit the various towns and supervise the work. A lady nurse would have many opportunities of doing good that a medical practitioner would lack. She would be able to talk with and advise native women, and to exert an influence which no gentleman could aspire to. It is true the work would be hard, beset with discouragements, and unrequited by gratitude, but, in addition to the achievement of gratifying statistical results, it would be by no means devoid of interest; and I am convinced, in view of the large number of ladies who yearly volunteer for work in the mission fields, that a sufficient number of qualified ladies would be found (some sixteen would suffice) willing to spend their time and talents in the endeavour to save a race of people from extinction, and to teach them to help themselves. The Government of the Colony could well afford

afford to set aside whatever sum should be required to meet the salaries necessary for the provision of such a staff.

50. But, failing lady nurses, qualified medical practitioners might be appointed to take the oversight of the town hospitals in the provinces, and use might be made to this end of the increasing staff of native medical practitioners.

51. Now I shall not hide the fact that when I have suggested to European officers the concentration of towns in Fiji I have met almost universally with one reply—that, however desirable the proposed alteration might be, it is impossible of accomplishment. Fijians, it is said, will not remove their towns at a bidding, will not forsake their ancestral lands, will not cement into large communities, and could not possibly feed themselves if they did so.

52. In reply, I may say that I believe Fijians will not willingly concentrate their towns; but it may be taken for granted that they will not willingly do anything else towards their preservation that may require action. They are doubtless attached to their village sites, but they frequently shift these sites nevertheless. They will not willingly forsake their ancestral lands, but, according to the extract from Mr. Carew's Minute given above, the ownership of the lands is in the hands of a few members of resident *matagalis*, and by the system which I suggest this ownership would be revised in a manner calculated to secure the greatest good to the greatest number.

53. As regards the feeding of the inhabitants of large towns, I do not see any insuperable difficulty. Natives now walk, in some cases, five or seven miles to plant their gardens in order to maintain their title to lands; and in almost every part of the Colony I think planting land could be obtained nearer to the town than that.

It is believed that, from their system of agriculture, natives require large tracts of land; but it must be remembered that one square mile of *taro* will maintain 15,000 people; and there are many places in the Colony where this food can be grown in very large areas. The cultivation of rice should also be introduced, and the use of maize meal and the rational use of animal food inculcated.

Moreover, the quantity of land available would be as large as at present in the aggregate, and the size and number of the large towns could be regulated to suit it. For my own part, I certainly do not believe the scheme impossible. If once the interest of such a chief as Roko Tui Tailevu or Roko Tui Cakaudrove could be enlisted in it, the alteration could be readily effected, and in any case I believe it could be brought about by perseverance.

54. But if this alteration could not be brought about, I would suggest that hospitals be built in Roko's towns, and that women repair to them to be confined and to be attended to for a month or two after confinement. After that period the mother might be returned to her home accompanied by the child if the progress of both had been satisfactory.

The staff of qualified European nurses mentioned in my alternative proposal might be stationed in these provincial hospitals, and the same number of nurses would suffice in either case.

55. During the period of her stay there, the native mother could be taught many things concerning the rearing of her child which she ought to know but does not. Little arts of cookery might be shown to her, and the knowledge of the use of that invaluable (but to a Fijian unknown) remedy in infantile sickness—the warm bath—be imparted.

56. The child would receive a start in life which would in many instances carry it through the dangers of its first year, during which nearly one half of the children now die.

But in any case I think a considerable saving would be effected in the lives of infants under the age of one month, who at present form 17 per cent. of the whole death-roll.

57. But to be effective, a scheme of this nature should provide for the nursing of the children throughout their first year. That cannot well be attained while the towns remain scattered as they are, but something might in time be done towards establishing a nursing-house in every village, where the children could be looked after by one of the elder women while the mothers were at work.

58. It is difficult, however, to do anything in a small town, unless the *Turaga ni koro* (the chief of the town) happen to be a good man. The individual native will not move towards any improvement (unless it be something that takes his passing fancy), except under the orders of his chief, and in most of the provinces a very great deal of the executive power has passed into the hands of the *Turaga ni koro*.

When a *Turaga ni koro* is an intelligent, active, and good man, he is a valuable power in the land, but when, as is too often the case, he is but an indifferent or a bad one, he is a clog on all progress.

59. The number of good men combining the elements of activity, intelligence, and influence is surprisingly few among the native population. Probably there are enough to furnish chiefs for the small number of towns that would result from the centralisation that I have proposed; but while the towns continue to number from 1,300 to 1,400 they will continue to be internally governed in a way from which no lasting improvement can be expected.

60. I, therefore, think that if a simultaneous movement cannot be made towards that end, every opportunity should be embraced to effect the judicious concentration and centralisation of native towns. This, I believe, would be an improvement of lasting benefit. I do not mean to suggest that the system of rearing children which I have proposed, should be a permanent measure; but I think it is necessary that it should remain in force for from twelve to fifteen years or longer, until the previous order of things be forgotten.

61. From that point something more suitable might be evolved. Improvements in the meantime could be introduced in the food that the people use.

One such improvement—the use of rice—is now gathering strength. I have heard of a number of cases where natives who have been in gaol for a few years, and have there become habituated to the use of rice, come from their towns to the European plantations to exchange their yams and native food for the labourer's ration of rice. Such as these are perhaps not happy examples of improvement, but they nevertheless exist. Rice does not appear from analysis to be a cereal of great nutritive value, but

it is one that must be eaten with a concomitant to be palatable, and together they probably form a better article of diet than the root food of the natives. It is at least known that there are progressive races of men whose staple food is rice. Those races who live mainly on root food are, I believe, everywhere effete. This, of course, does not apply to such people as vary their diet of roots with milk, meat, or other foods of higher value.

62. The concentration of villages and the appointment of English lady-nurses in each province might be made to secure the following advantages, viz. :—

- (1) Economy in native administration.
- (2) Increased efficiency, the smaller number of villages permitting the selection of superior men as chiefs, officers, ministers, and teachers.
- (3) Wider area of selection in marriage.
- (4) Improved sanitation.
- (5) Better houses.
- (6) Increased domestic privacy.
- (7) A better division of land.
- (8) More frequent European supervision.
- (9) Better midwifery.
- (10) Proper feeding of infants in instances where the mother's milk is not available or is unsuitable.
- (11) Improved nursing of children.
- (12) Better care of the sick.
- (13) Segregation of cases of yaws.
- (14) Attention being directed to cases of neglect of children.
- (15) Timely and more effective treatment of epidemics to which so many natives now fall victims.

63. A great deal might also, in the meantime, be done to improve the status of women in the community, and I have hope that some measures (which I need not here enumerate) might be introduced that would tend to eradicate the baneful system of *kerekere* referred to by Mr. Thomson. But alterations of this nature are all too slow in operation to act decisively on the first object in view, viz., checking the rapid decrease of the population.

64. The decrease of the population arising from the mortality among young infants is a species of atrophy which, when its progress has been stopped, may admit of improvements being introduced from such secondary sources as I have above indicated, but which in the first place, demands the application of a separate, specific, and immediate remedy; and I venture to respectfully submit that the two major remedies that I have taken the liberty to suggest in the foregoing somewhat hasty minute are those which may be most effectually applied.

J. STEWART.

The Hon. J. S. Kdala.

from John B. Thurston

REPRINT of Memorandum upon the establishment of District Plantations in the Colony of Fiji for the purpose of enabling the Native Population to provide their Taxes in a manner accordant with Native customs. Dated, 1st August, 1875.

THE proposed plan of establishing plantations for the purpose of providing the natives with a means of paying their taxes, requires perhaps a few words in explanation before entering into a sketch of the plan itself.

In some countries taxes and rent are paid in kind instead of in money. In civilised or semi-civilised countries—or those, like India and China, where the science of political economy is almost unknown—this system largely prevails. The payment of taxes in produce or kind is doubtless a bad one; for experience teaches that public revenue derived from such a source usually suffers so much from the mismanagement and peculation of the collectors, that very little of what is contributed by the people ever finds its way into the Treasury.

For these and many other reasons public revenue is better derived in money. It may, however, occur that countries exist, the people of which are rude and uncivilised, where they tenaciously adhere to the antiquated customs of their race; and where, as they have no money, they must either pay in produce or not at all. Fiji is one of such places. Its people have no money amongst themselves, and the European trading and planting population (under 900 persons) is too small to provide the bulk of them with work or any other means of gaining money. There can be no doubt also that if it were possible to collect revenue in money, the same objection as is taken above to the levying of taxes in kind, would present itself. In a young colony like Fiji, with a large native population, the collection of revenue from natives must, in a large measure, be entrusted to native chiefs. There are two temptations which Fijian chiefs find it difficult to withstand. One is that of getting into debt with traders, the other is that of looking upon taxes paid to them by their tribe, on account of the Government, as in part a sort of "benevolence" to themselves. The facility with which they can get into debt, and accumulate debt upon debt, together with the constant pressure of petty creditors is the primary cause of their appropriating public money to their own uses. "This tendency to accept credit," says a late writer, "is a state of things which occurs in every part of the world in which men of a superior race freely trade with men of a lower race. It extends trade no doubt for a time, but it demoralises the native, checks true civilisation, and does not lead to any permanent increase in the wealth of the country; so that the European government of such a country must be carried on at a loss." The custom of Fijians is to pay their taxes in produce or service; and the custom only requires to be properly defined and settled in order to produce a very fair amount of revenue from native sources at a moderate cost of collection.

At the present time there exist all the laws, customs, rights, and obligations, which, unlike anything found in other large groups of islands in Western Polynesia, have for an unknown period held the Fijians together as a homogeneous people. Upon the laws, many of which are in their tendency eminently favourable to the proposed system, much improvement may be made; but I am confident that it will be better in every respect to adopt and improve them, than to endeavour to frame Ordinances based upon modern ideas and the necessities of a highly civilised state of society, and to enact them for the control of a people just emerging from barbarism. I consider that the instant and complete application of English law and freedom to the native population of this colony would not only be fatal to a success of the culture system, but I do not hesitate to say that it would be fatal to the satisfactory raising of revenue in any shape from the natives. The only law hitherto known to the Fijian is the command of his chief and the customs of his tribe; and it is not to be expected that the cession of the country can alter the manners and customs of its aborigines with the same speed and certainty that it changed the sovereignty. One very valuable source of revenue is the cocoanut trees. But to protect these from the improvident waste of the people, the Rokos and the chiefs of districts should be allowed

to

to retain their power to "tabu." They should also have power, as heretofore, to "lavaki" cultivated lands, *i.e.*, command the people of any town in their district to perform such work upon them as they may direct. (See Note A.)

Of the necessity and results of continuous labour the Fijians have no idea whatever; at first they can only be regarded as instruments by which a system is to be established for their benefit; and hence, as in a public school, for instance, strict rules must be enacted, making a fair and proper amount of labour a matter of law, and not a matter of choice. Hereafter, when training has had its effect, and a better knowledge has been acquired of the value and right of property, the acquisitive character of the Fijian will, I think, be a sufficient spur to his industry; but for some years to come he must be made to work, and must be punished for laziness or neglect. The salvation of the race is simply a question of real kindness and forced industry, or of mistaken kindness, indolence, and consequent misery and degradation.

I have dwelt somewhat digressively upon the laws, habits, and weaknesses of the people, because I am convinced that it is, in the first instance, impossible to impose upon them British law exclusively; because it would cause an early failure to the system now under consideration, and because it would render abortive any other scheme to raise revenue from the natives, who—relieved from their old law, and ignorant of the new—would fall out of proper and necessary control.

The chief element upon the native side to the success of this scheme is—the creation of a necessity to work.

Upon the governing side every effort should be made to improve the existing tribal organisation of the natives. Very great good may be speedily effected by adding to, and gradually improving upon, such native laws and customs as are not repugnant to natural law; by interdicting oppressive ones, and by placing the natives under the direction of active and intelligent officers selected from both races.

This necessity may in a great measure be created by the imposition of a tax upon every male between the ages of sixteen and sixty; or, which would be better, upon every village or district, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants and the fertility and natural advantages of their lands.

In considering the nature of the articles to be produced under the culture system, it will be necessary to have regard to those that are in constant commercial demand, and the value of which is not, like cotton for instance, subject to frequent and great fluctuations. The imperfect system of agriculture practised by the people, and their irregular and semi-civilised habits, must also be kept in view. The Fijians are agriculturists by birth and inclination; but their manner of cultivation is rude, and their disinclination to cultivate products to which they are strangers, is a very strongly marked trait in their character. Time and tuition are therefore both to be taken into consideration; but not more so, perhaps, than would be necessary in the initiation of an entirely new policy or scheme among a more advanced people.

It has occurred to me, whilst considering the question of revenues to be derived from natural productions, that in the first instance it will be expedient to direct attention to those that are indigenous to the country. In the preparation of one article alone of our exports it is apparent that another material of greater value is thrown away and lost to the Colony for want of the necessary machinery to prepare it for market. The evidences of this fact I shall adduce further on; meantime I submit for His Excellency's consideration, in connection with his general policy, that it would be well to make advances to certain districts in order that its inhabitants may be supplied with machinery. No great outlay would be necessary; and precedent is not wanting for the Crown supplying natives, desirous of advancing themselves in commerce, with the implements or machinery for doing so.

Until the plan, sketched further on, or a better one—having the same object in view—is perfected, it will be necessary to depend entirely upon existing resources for our native revenue. Fiji is comparatively rich in cocoanut groves; and hundreds of tons of copra, or the dried kernel of the nut, are exported annually to the United Kingdom and the Continent—but the whole of the valuable cocoanut fibre is lost, because the makers of the copra have no means of preparing the husk or fibre of the nut for sale.

The country abounds with plantains, of which the natives distinguish about twenty-five sorts. According to Seemann the "Soaga," a wild variety which grows in all the valleys, a few hundred feet above the level of the sea, is the *Musa troglodytarum*—"the plant from which," says Sir John Bowring in his work upon the Philippine Islands, "Manilla hemp is obtained." There is also a cultivated variety named "Vundi Vula" or white plantain, which, I think, is the *Musa textilis* of botanists. This variety yields a fine, bright, and strong Manilla hemp. Samples sent by me to Sydney were valued at from £35 to £45 per ton delivered there. The hemp is obtained from the stem or trunk of the plant. The fibre, obtained from the petioles of the leaves, is so fine that it is said the finest muslins may be made from it.

The preparation of these fibres by hand is both a long and difficult process; and in order to export them in any quantities machinery must be imported.

It is very probable that with a little alteration the machinery used in New Zealand for cleaning *Phormium tenax* might be adopted here for Manilla hemp. If the thick laminae, of which the plantain stem is composed, were crushed between smooth or fluted rollers the hard outer epiderm would be broken up, and the cellulose—of which there is a large quantity—might be got rid of by washing and beating. In the preparation of an article like this the services of women and children might be very largely engaged. (See Note B.)

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to manage the machinery, running at a rapid rate, and driven by steam power.

The chief indigenous productions of Fiji and their values are,—

				£	s.	d.	
Copra, approximate value in Fiji	...	...	...	8	0	0	per ton.
Oil	"	"	...	20	0	0	"
Coir	"	"	...	18	0	0	"
Manilla	"	"	...	25	0	0	"
Yaka	"	"	...	20	0	0	"
Tobacco	"	"	...	84	0	0	"
Fungus	"	"	...	0	0	4	per lb.
Bêche-de-mer	"	"	...	60	0	0	per ton.
Tortoise-shell	"	"	...	0	10	0	per lb.

I may add that "Annatto" (*Bixa orellana*) grows wild, though it has not, strange to say, been noticed by Seemann or any other writer upon Fiji. The value of Annatto is from £70 to £80 per ton; and I find, from commercial reports, that England alone imports more than £12,000 worth annually. Its preparation is simple. A bastard Ipecacuanha, which, like Annatto, is found wild in all the low lands, was, with the Senna plant, introduced many years ago by the French missionaries, and, though never as yet turned to any account, might perhaps be cultivated with advantage.

There are many other productions that might be utilised, such as Candlenuts (*Aleurites triloba*), the oil of which equals rape-seed oil in value (£30 to £32 per ton), Arrowroot, Turmeric, Ginger, &c. The native Rattan might also find a foreign market; and a home industry might be created by the manufacture of baskets, chairs, and ere long mat-bags for sugar. These bags, which might be made upon the pattern of the vacoa bags of Mauritius or the smaller sized bags of Java, could be made from the *Pandanus caricosus* or "Voivoi" of the natives. The native women of Fiji are very clever in the making or plaiting of bags, and I see no reason why sugar bags should not be exported to Queensland as vacoa bags are from Madagascar and the Seychelles to Mauritius.

Upon the foregoing articles, and any others that I may have omitted to mention, the native revenue would have to depend *for the next four or five years*, by which time coffee, cocoa, and other plantations would commence yielding. I have not mentioned sugar, but I am of opinion that under certain circumstances it might be profitably grown by natives, and form an early source of revenue. The system, however, which I would recommend to be adopted for the cultivation of sugar requires combination with settlers, and also trenches upon important questions, such as the introduction of European capital and population. I will, therefore, state my views on this matter in the concluding part of this paper, confining myself in the meantime to the scheme, as it may be commenced by the native race without any immediate aid beyond the Government. (*See Note C.*)

I would recommend that plantations be commenced at such places in the country as offer the greatest general advantages. One of the greatest being the firm rule of the native chief or Roko of the district. Bau, Rewa, Kadavu, Bua, Central Viti, and Lau are fit places to commence at ; Ra, Ba, Yasawa, and Mathuata are disorganised districts, and (Mathuata excepted, which produces cocoanuts) are poor in everything but *bêche-de-mer*. Thakaundrovi, though a large and comparatively rich district, requires organising. Hitherto its people have been impoverished by the frequent exactions of its chief, and periodically spoiled by the Algerines of the Pacific—that is to say, by the Tongans—whose power and influence the hereditary chief has never quite shaken off. The provinces named should be defined by exact boundaries as soon as possible, but at present the existing and somewhat arbitrary divisions must be accepted. In future, the districts or subdivision of the provinces should be formed into wards or parishes, and, as the tribal organisation of the people is improved upon, the town and common lands of each ward should be surveyed and marked out. I would further advise the aggregation of many petty towns—some of which do not contain half-a-dozen houses, and are the refuge of the discontented and troublesome—into one larger one. The people would thus be more under the surveillance of the authorities, more able to co-operate in the work of their plantations, and more amenable to the influences of advancing civilisation. The principal chiefs are all in favour of such a step being taken.

Every parish or ward should have a farm or plantation in common, whereat the people should raise such crops as it may be decided upon to cultivate. The locality and crop should be decided upon by a Government officer, duly appointed for that purpose, acting in conjunction with the Roko of the province. They should select the locality by personal inspection, and with due regard to soil, climate, and facility of communication. Each town within the ward should be assessed in labour, at such times, and

and in rotation, or such other manner as may be regulated by the Governor. The combined action of the people of one or more towns at one plantation would exactly accord with the customs and habits of the people, as shown in Mr. Wilkinson's paper upon the "Lala" or "Service Tenure." The Roko should, I think, have his authority confirmed by law; he and the Bulis and Native Magistrates should be made responsible for the working of the people, and be empowered to punish summarily any wilful neglect or disobedience of orders. In addition to these officers there are the petty chiefs or head men of towns, upon whom, and the native village police, certain duties in regard to the system should be imposed.

The Roko should consult and confer with the Resident European Magistrate of his province upon matters affecting the conduct of the district plantations, and the latter should report any causes which lead to the partial or total neglect of the instructions which from time to time may be issued by the Governor in respect to such plantations or to the system generally.

Before quitting the subject of the supervisory officers I must add that, while fully believing that the establishment of district plantations among the Fijians will be highly beneficial to them, I feel that the success of the system depends very much upon the strength and efficiency of the machinery by which it is to be at first set and kept in motion. The responsible and directing officers of each province are of course the Roko and the European Magistrate, but the Roko as yet has not the requisite knowledge to carry out unassisted the necessary work of the plantations, and the Resident Magistrate is not likely to have the time. Under these circumstances I recommend that officers, acquainted with the language, and possessed of some agricultural experience be appointed to instruct and assist the people. Their duty would require them to be constantly moving about the provinces, encouraging and instructing the natives, and reporting to the Resident Magistrate. The principal officer might with advantage have associated with him an intelligent native chief.

As soon as the district farm lands have been selected, clearing and planting should at once commence. Coffee, cacao, cloves, tobacco, vanilla and other spices, might be cultivated without delay. Cocoanuts might be planted to a large extent, and with great future advantage; if attended to they will bear in four and a half or five years, and at seven or ten years of age would become a source of large revenue.

In Fiji the annual value to the trader of a nut tree has been estimated at four shillings per annum—but this is a very low value, for the kernel only of the nut has been taken into account: but, in fact, every part of the tree will contribute something to commerce. With the exception of the districts of Tailevu, Ra, and Ba, the cocoanut tree thrives well throughout Fiji, and many still vacant places upon the shores of Vanualevu, the Central Islands, and Kadavu, might be lined with this valuable and comparatively everlasting tree. Coffee commences bearing in its third or fourth year and, though it blossoms twice, the berry, as at Jamaica, ripens only once in the year—that is to say, in February—just after the culmination of our short Summer, a season corresponding with the month of August in the warmer part of Jamaica.

Cacao, according to some authorities, bears in the seventh or eighth year after planting. Consul Perry (Brazil) says, "It produces fruit three years after planting, and, with moderate care, will give two yearly crops for fifty or sixty years." I gather from this statement that the cacao plantations referred to must be situated in a lower latitude than that in which Fiji is placed, and influenced by a more equable double season. The remarks I have made as to the ripening of coffee at the season of our short Summer will doubtless apply also to cacao. (See Note D.)

Tobacco may be cut and housed in four months from the time of planting. It requires in Fiji, as it does elsewhere, new soil, and it is an exhausting crop. Nadroga is a province in which tobacco might be grown—and manufactured upon the spot—with great advantage. The fragrance and strength of the tobacco leaf is very much deteriorated by exportation. Cigars made upon, or near to, the plantations upon which the leaf is grown, are much superior to any made in the neighbouring colonies or Europe, from imported leaf: tobacco cannot stand much handling, packing, and repacking, and least of all the "re-sweating" that it has to undergo at the hands of manufacturers. There is a good field open at Nadroga for enterprise in this direction; and the manufacture of cigars would find employment for numbers of women and children.

As the provincial plantations, and their crops, are at the present moment all *in futuro*, it seems premature for me to attempt anything beyond a sketch of the details of the proposed system. The preparation of the district plantations can begin at once; but for the purposes of an immediate revenue it will be necessary to foster and make use of every one of the existing or indigenous resources of the Colony.

The plan proposed, as I understand it, is this: That the native population may contribute their taxes in the form of produce instead of money. That the produce contributed upon account of the assessed tax upon the district shall be received and paid for by the Government at a fixed rate, and that it shall be sold on the spot to contractors.

Among the European traders and settlers generally, this plan of raising a revenue will be held in great disfavour; and I anticipate much early trouble and annoyance from the fact. Its first effect will be to touch the trader in the pocket, and hence its working and the object of the Government will be misrepresented—both within and without the Colony. As a rule the trader pays a native from one-half to two-thirds of the sum he would pay to an European for an article of the same value, and moreover frequently pays him in worthless barter. If a native buys cloth or calico from the trader he pays at least 100 per cent. more than a European would have to pay.

By

By encouraging the natives to become large producers (and the Government only can do this), the natives ere long will learn to acquire and value money properly, and they will be much larger purchasers from fair-dealing traders than they are now. In the absence of money throughout the Group it may be as well to lay down a standard in "kind."

The following quantities of indigenous produce represent a value of 20s., estimating them at the ordinary rates current at Levuka:—

Copra	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	lbs. 280
Coir	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 118
Manilla	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 83
Yaka	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 112
Tobacco	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 84
Fungus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 60
Bêche-de-mer	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 30
Tortoise-shell	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	" 2
Cocoanut Oil	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	galls. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$

If trained to some order and system a native can very easily earn his taxes. To show this I will select two of the chief indigenous products, viz., cocoanut and bêche-de-mer.

Copra (the dried kernel of the nut) is worth upon an average £8 per ton of 2,240 lbs. It requires 6,000 nuts to make this quantity; therefore 20s. worth of copra requires for its production only 625 nuts. It is calculated that a cocoanut tree yields at a minimum one hundred nuts per annum, so that six trees—which planted at 20 feet apart occupy only one-twelfth of an acre—produce, within a small fraction, one man's taxes. Of course some allowance must be made for loss and wastage. Damp weather and insects unite in destroying copra; but under any circumstances it will be seen that no great difficulty need present itself to any moderately industrious native or community of natives.

In addition, however, to the kernel, which, as just described, may be converted into copra, there is the valuable fibre or coir, every bit of which is at present thrown away by the natives. To this fact and the manner in which I propose to stay further loss, I will refer towards the close of this Memorandum. In Ceylon and Cochin China, even the mid-rib of the leaflets are turned to account by making them into brooms, and the village women and children of Fiji might occasionally be profitably employed in making them, as they would find a ready market in the colonies. With regard to bêche-de-mer, I have been frequently assured by intelligent natives that upon the North Coast of Viti and Vanua Levu, and at some places in the Windward Group, particularly Fulanga, any active Fijian can, in two nights, catch sufficient "fish" to fill, when dried, a three-bushel bag. The value of such a bag full would be from 25s. to 40s., according to the variety (of which there are some seven or eight) and the perfection with which it is cured. At the present moment this trade is almost entirely in the hands of Chinamen, who employ quite a fleet of small boats in the business. A large and regular revenue might be derived by the judicious management of these fisheries, which, in my opinion, should become a "droit" of the Crown. Bêche-de-mer, like turtles, are, among the Fijians, "royal fish." They are only caught by command of the supreme chief, and therefore in assuming the right of the Crown (to bêche-de-mer at all events) no wrong would be committed or grievance raised. The habits of this fish, or properly speaking "holothuria," should be observed, and their breeding-time be made a close season, or the practice of indiscriminate fishing all the year round will soon produce a great diminution in the annual supply.

More than thirty years ago £16,000 worth of bêche-de-mer was taken away by one trader at the rate of £3,000 worth per annum, and all from the North Coasts of Vanua and Viti Levu. Until lately the reefs have not been fished excepting in an irregular and indifferent way. The native wars, which raged between the tribes of the North Coasts of the above-named islands for the ten or fifteen years preceding 1863-4, and from which they have never recovered, made them poor and indolent. Their family power and relationship was weakened, and in some instances destroyed, and no one chief has until recently been established as a ruler. Although well off for suitable timber—dwelling upon the sea-board, and constantly requiring them—they have hardly a canoe in which they can go fishing. One of the first things to which the Rokos of the provinces should be directed is the building of canoes.

Prior to the late epidemic (measles) the native population of the Colony—exclusive of the "Tholo" or hill tribes—was estimated to be 114,636. (See Note E.) One fourth of this number were persons who, in their several provinces, might have contributed to the assessment of their district. Supposing that one-fifth of this number were lost in the epidemic there would now remain about 23,000 taxable people. If the several districts are assessed in produce at the rates laid down above, and one-half or $\frac{1}{2}$ of the value is paid to the revenue as assessed taxes, it would leave $\frac{7}{10}$ to be paid to the producers and $\frac{3}{10}$ to go towards paying for the machinery provided in each district—that is to say, the receiving rate on the spot for the before-mentioned quantities of produce would be 7s. By this calculation the native revenue should be about £11,000, not perhaps in the first year but as soon as the system begins to work. Up to the present time, and by seeking to raise the tax in money, the sum of £4,000 per annum has barely been reached.

I quite agree with the opinion expressed by Mr. Chalmers, that a Fijian can pay a tax of 20s. per annum without being in any way oppressed; I go even further and say that they will be benefited by the industry and activity which is necessary to procure this sum, either in cash or kind. There are, however, some calls upon the natives, made without intermission, and frequently upon the most absurd grounds, from which, I think, they might in part be relieved.

Another matter requiring remedy is the arbitrary exactions of the chiefs. This evil will be corrected by defining,—as the Rajahkaria has been in Ceylon,—the service rights or "Lala" of the late ruling

ruling chiefs. "Lala" should be confined as far as possible to house-building and planting. The donation or payment of sinnet, mats, pots, salt, and native cloth should not be stopped, but only regulated. Native salt and cloth are giving way to English manufactures, and brittle clay pots are yielding to Birmingham wares. In a short time "Lala" in this form will fall into disuse, and be confined to the two first-named services, but no chief should be allowed hereafter to seize upon the private property of the commonalty—either openly or under cloak of "begging."

As in view of the long time that must elapse before coffee, cacao, pepper, and other exotics can yield any return, even if planted within the next six months, I will now proceed to show His Excellency what a large amount of raw material is annually lost to the country.

The loss is in cocoanut fibre.

I have taken great care to assure myself of the relative yield of copra and fibre from a given quantity of nuts. My authorities are the Messrs. Hennings, J. C. Smith & Co., Mr. Hill of Rambai, and Mr. Logan of Lauthala. I have also visited a great number of plantations, and made inquiries of those who have had experience in the matter.

Six thousand nuts of average size will produce 1 ton of copra, and a trifle more than 1 ton of fibre or coir,—that is to say equal weights of the two articles. Copra, in Levuka, is worth £8, and coir £16 per ton. Therefore when the husk of the nut is not worked up by the maker of copra he loses (less the difference between the cost of drying nuts and ginning fibre) twice as much as he makes.

Reference to past exports will give an idea of our annual loss by the waste of this valuable article, for which there is a constant and increasing demand.

EXPORTS.

From the 1st October, 1872, to the 30th September, 1873.

	Tons.				Value.		
					£		£
Copra exported	258	...	2,064	
Coir ,,	51	...	816	
Diff.	207			Loss 3,312

Same months 1873 to 1874.

Copra exported ...	...	...	...	619	...	4,952	
Coir ,, ...	...	...	...	93	...	1,488	
Diff. ...	...	...	...	526			Loss 8,416

From September 30th to December 31st, 1874.

Copra exported ...	...	...	...	678	...	5,424	
Coir ,, ...	...	...	...	55	...	880	
Diff. ...	...	...	...	623			Loss 9,968

Total loss ... £21,696

The natives only commenced to abandon the old practice of making oil in favour of copra in the year 1871. At the outset they made but little, being both inexperienced and opposed, like all people of their class, to attempt any new form of industry. It will be seen by the foregoing returns that the manufacture of copra is increasing, and with it the waste of fibre.

The coir hitherto exported has all been made by European settlers engaged in the copra trade, therefore the loss upon cocoanuts estimated for the above period to equal £21,696 has fallen upon the natives alone.

There will, however, be some waste under any circumstances, and the erection of machinery as proposed will necessitate the expenditure of money, but when these and incidental matters are taken into consideration there will still remain a very large margin of clear gain and profit to the Colony.

There is no difficulty in transporting nuts; they may be towed for miles along the sea-coast to a mill. The mill itself could be purchased from Government by the people of the district in which it was erected, and become their own property.

I have in the course of this Memorandum dwelt very strongly upon the indigenous resources of the Colony, and in doing so my object has been to endeavour to stop the present waste of a valuable and plentiful article, and to suggest an immediate source of revenue from materials at hand, while other schemes for our commercial and financial advancement are being planned and perfected.

JOHN B. THURSTON.

NOTES TO THE FOREGOING.

NOTE A.

The assessment of districts would accord more with the customs of the Fijians than the imposition of a tax *per caput*. The reason of this may be gathered from Mr. Wilkinson's paper upon "Lala;" but it may be as well to state here that the usages and customs—indeed the whole groundwork of Fijian society is based upon what is only a first or second advance from the communal system. The individual, as regards rights and obligations, is not known to Fijian law. Their system of kinship is agnatic. They do and suffer as communities. Their "qalis" are families—originally of one brotherhood—and they are under the authority of one patriarchal head or chief; hence they act well in communities, but as individuals they fail, for as a rule they have no individuality.

NOTE B (1).

Manilla and other fibres have been made from various varieties of the plantain and banana. The Manilla is got from *Musa textilis*. There are other varieties grown here, almost equally rich in fibre with *textilis*, as the "dacca," "maculata" and several others, which, by comparison with the quantity and quality of fibre made in Manilla, the Phillipine Islands, &c., are equally good with the best of them. On an average a full-grown plant is found to produce 5 lbs. of clean fibre; and in their own country the best exertions of experienced workmen (Indian or Chinese) produce about 12 lbs. of fibre per day.

NOTE B (2).

A machine for cleaning and preparing banana and other Fijian fibre is thus described in the *New Zealand Herald*:—
 "These fibres are usually prepared by hand labour, to imitate which has been a leading idea with the inventors. The pine-apple leaf, or the pulp containing the fibres from the banana stem, being first cut into strips, passes into and through two small but powerful fluted rollers in which it is sufficiently crushed and broken up to admit of its being operated upon by scraping cylinders, between which it is then carried.

"These two cylinders or drums are connected together by spin-wheels, revolve in the same direction; and are adjusted to scrape alternately both sides of the leaf or pulp in the following manner:—

"At equal distances round both cylinders are securely and alternately fixed a number of steel scraping-knives and sustaining-plates, or bed for the knife to scrape upon. All of these knives and plates are supported by, and work upon, powerful steel springs of a peculiar and novel application, yet exceedingly simple.

"Now, as they revolve together, the scraping-knife upon (say) No. 1 cylinder, is brought into direct and firm contact with the sustaining-plate on (say) No. 2 cylinder, at about half-an-inch before they reach the "periphery" line, or circumference of the circle, and then, by the yielding of the double springs, without percussion. By their pressure likewise they remain in such contact until, as these cylinders continue to revolve, they have reached the similar space of half-an-inch on the other side of this "periphery" line, and then separate.

"Thus the leaf, or pulp, being at the time held firmly between the fluted rollers, is scraped on one side, between this knife and sustainer, for the space of about 1 inch. The action is then instantaneously reversed; the knife now upon (say) No. 2 cylinder follows upon the sustainer of (say) No. 1 cylinder, scraping over the same space of about 1 inch, and finishing completely the other side of the leaf or pulp, and this operation thus alternately continues, as the feeding rollers supply the exact quantity the cylinders are calculated to clean.

"Adjusting screws, acting directly upon the springs, cause the contact between the knives and sustainers to be made either with extreme lightness, or as powerfully as required, according to the soft or hard nature of the fibre to be scraped. The machine, therefore, it will be readily understood is perfectly adapted for all the various kinds of vegetable fibre. The cylinders revolve slowly—making only 200 revolutions per minute, and require but 1½-horse driving power.

"As the banana yields more abundantly from the new shoot, the stems are cut down and left to rot upon the ground as soon as the fruit has ripened; no native difficulty as to supplying them will therefore occur. Plantations, however, could be made, if necessary, in the vicinity of the mill—competent authorities computing the drop at 2 tons of clean fibre per acre.

"The fluted rollers feed into the machine 1,800 inches or 150 feet per minute, cleaning therefore a large bulk per diem. The only after-manipulation required is thorough washing, and then drying as rapidly as possible. From 2 to 3 hours completes the operation without waste or injury to the fibre.

"To clean soft pulpy matter similar to the aloes, or the stem of the banana, which contains the fibre enclosed in it, mere contact of the scrapers and sustainers are necessary, with barely any deflection of the spring action. The pine-apple leaf being of a much harder nature requires greater pressure, but in this respect no other species can compare with the *Phormium Tenax*, or New Zealand flax, the fibre of which is by far the most difficult to extract from its gummy and resinous matters. Yet this machine, without any undue spring pressure, scrapes through this solid leaf perfectly, producing the fibre from it of double the value to that obtained under the beating or stripping process hitherto employed.

"The banana and plantain are the most prolific, and will therefore probably be the most lucrative of the Fiji fibres to manipulate.

"Machinery and cheap labour combined will produce Manilla hemp from them in these islands, at a cost not exceeding £15 per ton, and if worked upon a large scale considerably less. The foreign market value of it is from £40 to £50 per ton."

NOTE C.

Whether the native population can or cannot cultivate sugar-cane upon their district plantation depends upon the possibility of selling it when grown. At present it is impossible, for there are neither mills nor the prospect of mills, excepting upon a few plantations where settlers are growing their own cane. Many people of great experience are of opinion that the business of sugar-growing and sugar-making should not be combined. That the attempt, as a rule, fails to produce the estimated result, but that when growers can sell their cane at a mill in the neighbourhood they generally do well. I am inclined to think that there is a great deal of truth in this statement.

Sugar-cane is not strictly indigenous to Fiji, but it must have been imported by the old Malayan and Papuan voyagers, centuries ago—its generic name is *Doru* (Tobu or Toru—Malay), and it is now found all over the Group. The natives like to cultivate it; they know the soil and localities suited for its growth; and there is plenty of excellent cane to be had for cuttings. It is by no means unlikely that capitalists would put up sugar-mills in several places, and be glad of the opportunity to do so if they could be assured of a certain supply of cane, either from the natives or the settlers, or from both. Some two years ago inquiries were made by a leading Sydney firm upon a project of this kind, and it is quite possible that an arrangement

arrangement of the sort might yet find favour. Such a plan, if carried out, would, I think, do much towards advancing the Colony, the future of which seems at the present moment to be depending very much upon the success of sugar-growing. Private enterprise in Fiji will at first be slow; and I think, some encouragement and inducement might be held out by the Government to capitalists desirous of investing their money in the Colony. If cane can be grown in large quantities there will be no difficulty in finding people to erect the necessary plant for crushing it.

NOTE D.

Cacao, from which the chocolate of commerce is made, is obtained in the from of seed-pods from a very handsome tree. In its nature it is even more tropical than coffee. The following notes on the subject of cultivation and preparation of the cacao or chocolate plant are from the Director of the Royal Botanic Garden, Pérádemaya, Ceylon.

“The cacao being an essentially tropical plant, its cultivation would doubtless be most profitable at a low elevation, and should scarcely be attempted above 2,000 feet. The soil should be friable to some depth, and well drained; good forest soil would of course be best, but that of native gardens would generally be very suitable. Shade is necessary for the cacao plants when young, but this need be but slight when they are more matured, as light and free ventilation are essential for the production of good and abundant crops.

“The seeds of cacao must be sown as soon as possible after they are gathered, as they soon spoil for germinating upon becoming dry. As germination soon commences and proceeds very rapidly, and as the young plants are very impatient of being transplanted, unless with the adoption of such precautions as to prevent their roots being in any way injured, arrangements must be made either for growing the seeds in a nursery, allowing a space of least a foot between each seedling, so that they may subsequently be taken up with the earth about their roots; or for sowing the roots singly in bamboo or other pots; or for putting two or three seeds in each place it is intended a tree shall occupy in the plantation, subsequently allowing only the strongest seedling of these two or three to remain.

“Cacao trees in the plantation should stand at a distance apart of 10 or 15 feet according to the richness of the soil; 12 feet being a very good average distance. The ground under the trees must be kept free from weeds, and well littered with decaying leaves and other vegetable matter. For convenience in gathering the fruit the tree should not be higher than 14 to 18 feet. As the flowers, which are produced in clusters upon the trunk and principal branches, are small and very delicate, great care should be taken that they are not rubbed off or injured.

“In the fourth year a good crop may be expected on good soil. The fruit must be quite ripe before it is gathered. When ripe it has a pale yellowish colour. After being picked it is allowed to lie in heaps for about 24 hours. Then the pods are cut open, and the pulpy mass of seeds taken out, and put into baskets, to be carried to a sloping paved barbecue, or into large open wicker-work baskets to drain. As soon as the drainage of the acid pulp has ceased, the mass is emptied into boxes in which “terrage,” or the process of sweating, is to continue for 36 or 48 hours, and by no means longer than 60 hours; or the quality of the cacao would be impaired. After removal from the sweating-boxes, the seeds must be freed from any extraneous adhering matter, and spread out loosely to dry in the sun, being turned over very frequently. This process of drying occupies about three weeks, and when complete the seeds should be of a fine dark red colour. The foregoing is the cacao seed of commerce. The produce of a tree, when prepared ranges from 5 lbs. to 8 lbs. The crop has the advantage of being easily cultivated and prepared for export by a few hands.”

NOTE E.

The following estimate of the native population is taken from returns made by Provincial officers at the end of 1874, prior to the outbreak of the measles:—

	Estimated Population, 1874.	Estimated Population September 1, 1875.
Ba and Yasawa	19,500	15,600
Bua	9,000	7,200
Lomaiviti	7,514	6,011
Thakaudrovi	12,000	9,600
Kandavu	10,000	8,000
Lau	3,442	2,754
Mathuata	5,000	4,000
Nandronga	8,000	6,000
Namosi	1,372	1,098
Rewa	22,500	18,000
Tailevu and Naitasiri	16,308	13,047
Central Vitilevu (Tholo)		10,000
	114,636	101,710

These returns are apparently below the mark, for the Wesleyan Mission Report of 1875 shows, prior to the measles, no fewer than 122,526 attendants upon public worship, as follows:—

Mission Circuits.	Attendants at Worship.
Lakemba	5,190
Loma Loma	3,041
Viwa, Tailevu	26,212
Bua	12,753
Bau, Tailevu	13,439
Navuloa and Theo. Institution	4,003
Cakaudrove	13,633
Ovalau	7,759
Rewa	26,296
Kadavu	10,200
Total	122,526

REPRINT

OF

MEMORANDUM OF 18TH DECEMBER, 1875,

BY

DAVID WILKINSON, Esq.,

ON

“LALA,” OR FIJIAN SERVICE TENURES.

THE custom, or rather institution of “Lava”-ing men or labourers and “Lavaka”-ing work is perhaps, from its very comprehensiveness, the most important question that can be considered in connection with native affairs. In some cases it is the thread or chain which runs through Fiji, and connects all its social and political institutions into one body. It is the only custom which changes but little throughout the Group. It has existed from time immemorial, was the very bulwark of their mythology, and in one form or other enters into all relationships. It is the indication of what relationships exist between the people and their Chiefs; in fact it is the keystone of the Chief's government and authority over his people, the channel through which comes his “sinews of war” in times of trouble; and his “ways and means” in times of peace. In other words it is the rent paid by the people for their privileges and the Chief's protection. To deal with it thoroughly in a paper like this would be impossible, because it would simply be a social or domestic history of Fiji. But in order to make the subject as clear as possible to His Excellency, and to describe its character and application generally, it will be best perhaps to confine my remarks to a description of what actually takes place under various circumstances.

1st. The Supreme Chief's Lala.—To commence with the necessities of life. As the planting season approaches the Chief may send word to the Chief or Chiefs of an island, district, or town, “I wish my garden planted by you this year;” or, which is equally common, any island, district, or town may send to know the Chief's pleasure, and ask, “May we not plant a garden?” I may remark here that a Chief never exercises the Lala (true and proper) over any other than his rightful subjects; not necessarily his own “Qali” only, but all over whom he holds sovereignty and acknowledged authority. Sometimes gardens are planted without the knowledge of the Chief, and when nearly matured formally presented. While such an act indicates loyalty it is not Lala, and is often done with some special object. It having been decided to plant (the Chief sometimes selects the exact plot of ground himself), then comes the different operations of clearing, burning, digging, and planting, all of which are duly reported to the Chief, who gives from time to time the necessary orders, and not infrequently directs the operations in person. In due time the yams have matured, and are ready for digging. The Chief is again sought, and issues his orders. The town probably fixes the day for digging or rather the day for finishing and housing, or if the Chief has so ordered, for bringing the crop to his own homestead. Before this day the Chief has been making his preparations for receiving them, which will probably be by informing his household, or rather the householders immediately connected with his own, that the crop is to be housed on a certain day, and he wishes the housers to have fish or pork to eat, as the case may be. With this information a good deal more is meant than really appears until the day arrives. The Chief prepares the principal portion of the feast, which will be yams or taro, and perhaps turtle. As soon as the housers have finished, and the Chief's oven is ready, the other householders begin to
bring

bring in their contributions, which will consist of food (fish chiefly), mats, native cloth, or anything esteemed or scarce with the people who are to receive it. Now, these householders have not themselves contributed all they bring, but each will have reported to his or her friends or neighbours, who, as a rule, respond, and what is called "help their friends or relatives." Of course the Chief's contribution of both food and property will more than exceed all the rest put together. The food and property is then piled in heaps, and, with a number of whales' teeth, is presented to the producers either by the Chief himself or his "Matanivanua" in a short speech, which is generally followed by some order, or general information, or instruction. Opportunities of this kind are seldom lost by a Chief, who generally finishes by showing them the benefits accruing from industry and peace, or of administering some reproof for misconduct to any person or Chief of town present. Being thus dismissed, the producers take possession of the food and property, and it is divided between the householders who have assisted towards the entertainment. Of course by far the larger portions are put aside into the Chief's yam store. There is another kind of Lavaka-ing gardens which ought perhaps also to be described. It may be called the Chief's personal or family garden for the year. He will probably send to a district to say that he wishes the said district to provide the "contents of the yam hills" of his garden, that is the "sets." This messenger does not go empty-handed. The Chief then proceeds to "Lavaka" the digging of his garden upon his own particular "Qali's" towns, who clear, dig, and hill up the ground, which may occupy one, two, or three days, according to the size of the ground or number of hands employed. The Chief daily provides the food, but that is all. It is then reported to the Chief of the district that the ground is ready, and as at the first intimation of the Chief's desires, a meeting of the elders of the town is called; they decide the number of yams each man is to contribute, which will probably be one or two, or if it be a very large garden, perhaps three each, this arranged, and the day for planting fixed the Chief of the district (Buli) despatches his messenger to say "we come to plant the garden on such a day;" then, as in the other case, provision is made, with perhaps this exception, the Chief does the whole of it himself, though there may be voluntary contributions by some of his people (which are always acknowledged when the yams are dug). The day arrives, the garden is planted amidst general rejoicing by the planters, to whom great license is allowed, and who indulge in witty and sarcastic sayings at the expense of the Chief's own "Qali," giving and answering calls to each other, toasts, and wishing, in various forms, success to planting and an abundant year. Then comes the presentation of food and property; the latter greatly exceeds, though plenty of both is expected, and considered Chief-like. I have seen a hundred whale's teeth presented, besides mats, native cloth, &c., in abundance. As before, a speech will be made, orders issued, reproof and advice given on any matter which may effect the general weal. When the planters return to their homes, and if there has been a good supply of food, &c., they spread the news as they go, extolling the Chief's power, greatness, and liberality. And here the Chief has often a special object, quite apart from getting his garden planted. Supposing he has reason to believe a district has become disaffected towards him, or disturbed in itself from any cause whatever, he will call them to do that, or some other kind of work, and generally, with the best results, he removes the disaffection, and sends them to their homes well pleased and more loyal than when they came. With very little difference, excepting perhaps in detail and a more limited application, the same system is followed by all Chiefs of inferior grade; such as the Chief's relatives, &c. Chiefs of tribes, down to heads of households, each calling upon his own "Qali," tribes, or family to help him, and making a compensating return to his helpers; and when the Chief has not been up to the mark in the latter, I have known a tribe to appeal to the supreme Chief, saying, "We went laden to plant our Chief's garden, and have returned hungry and empty handed;" which would result in the said Chief being reproved and exposed, and perhaps the tribe told they need not work for him again unless first remunerated, though the latter privilege would hardly be taken advantage of unless he were not their direct Chief, but from whom they know they will derive benefits in some other way, which advantage Fijians never lose when opportunity is favourable, even against their own Chiefs. The same system, with nearly all the same arrangements, applies to house building. The work is apportioned out to the several towns or tribes to be engaged; the owner of the house providing food, &c. It is only in some parts of Fiji, or under peculiar circumstances where direct pay is made to house builders.

The "lala," as exercised in connection with canoe building, has but slight difference, which, however, have been pointed out as oppressive to the particular town or tribe who provide food for the carpenters, and otherwise attend upon and assist them generally during the building; but it is probable, because it is not always known, that there is in one way or another a constant drain made upon the Chief by the said towns; and besides benefits they derive from the carpenters living amongst them, they are are often exonerated from assistance in other work to which their neighbours are called. The Chief provides the carpenters with tools, &c., and makes periodical gifts to them, or upon the fittings of certain pieces of woods, or the completion of particular parts of the canoe. When finished, the Chief's orders go out that upon a day named the canoe will be launched, the carpenters paid, &c., when all contribute both food and property, which, when handed over to the carpenters, are divided amongst them according to their grade or time they may have been employed on the canoe. After launching (that is if it be a canoe of importance), wherever a new canoe puts in, large quantities of food are presented, amidst general rejoicing, and the Chief who has completed such an undertaking is greatly extolled, and the carpenters praised for the character of the work done. Of course, ropes, sails, and tackling generally have to be provided, the former is frequently done by the Chief's own immediate retainers or town's people, and the mats are lavaka'd over perhaps the Chief's whole territory, each town's portion being named, which is generally one hundred fathoms of the narrow matting; and as soon as it is ready is brought in, which may be in about a fortnight after the order has been received, and in due form presented. All the mats are plaited by the women.

The next, perhaps, in order to be considered, and by far the most difficult to describe, is the custom of Lavak-ing food for any public occasion, or the visit of Chiefs and strangers from other provinces; and also when a Chief (say a Roko) is travelling through his own province either for pleasure

or on the business of the State; in each case, on his arrival in any town, food is at once prepared for him and his followers the townspeople each contributing their quota. If his visit has been announced, food will be ready cooked awaiting his arrival; then, if his stay be prolonged for a few days, each town in that particular district will contribute their portion for each daily entertainment, and will be "lavaka"-d by the Chief or Buli of the district, who simply sends to each town saying "the Chiefs are in our midst, staying at the town of ———." Then, in the case of a Chief or Roko visiting another province, which is generally a previously arranged matter, and often with a specific object, his intended visit will have been announced and, it may be, definite arrangements made, as to which towns are to take part in preparing the entertainment. As soon as he arrives messages are sent out, and the food comes in; generally in such a case the day of the visit is fixed, and as a Chief never goes to visit another empty handed, he never returns so. On this day there is a mutual exchange of presents. The guest having handed over his, then receives the return presents. The former are generally divided out to the contributors of food and property, or to those towns upon whom the Roko has been lala-ing during the visit. At such exchanges of civilities between Fijian Chiefs of high rank, large canoes and other of the most valuable of Fijian property change hands. The worst feature probably of these feasts is, that such a frightful waste of good food generally occurs, because a Chief must always provide more than is necessary, and try to excel his guest, or he loses caste in his eyes and those of his retainers; and when these visits are more of a public or national character the waste and destruction is most deplorable, and I have known, when such a Chief's visit has been prolonged, a district left in a state of want and famine. In dividing the property (that is, presents) of a visiting Chief it is considered quite a matter of the Roko's or host's own pleasure whether or not he divides a portion as above described to each town or tribe; but it must not be forgotten that all that a Chief possesses is regarded as public property, and is available for such purposes, and generally finds its way amongst his people; and again, on the other hand, all that is possessed by the people or tribes is regarded by them as really the Chief's, and at his service, though of course questions of polity and the Chief's concern for his people's welfare, and to retain their unbroken loyalty, always influence the exercise of his power or prerogative. Even in the old times these rights were very seldom exercised to the extreme, and only under peculiar circumstances, or in connection with their mythology. But, excepting perhaps in a few parts of the Group, this exercise of extreme power has passed away, and individual property is now respected. The character of a truly good ruling Fijian Chief is consideration for the welfare of his people; to conserve their interest and promote their increase is his great object and concern; he is the parent or patriarch of his people, and a Chief without these characteristics is called among his fellows "a Chief with but a Commoner's heart."

The above appears to be the object and manner in which the "lala" authority is exercised in the usual ordinary and regular course of things.

There are, however, a few other instances in which the "lala" authority is exercised, but I think they ought to be called special or extraordinary, and it may be said, with some truth perhaps, to be of recent introduction, but this is only in reference more particularly to its object. The first instance I would describe is "lavaka"-ing work to be done for white settlers, which is generally of two kinds, such as house building, contract or plantation work. In one case a settler goes to the Chief and desires him either to undertake a particular work or send some town or towns to do it. The Chief allots the work to certain people, who, having performed it, receive through the Chief the full amount paid by the owner; but in the other case the Chief takes to himself the whole of the pay, or perhaps a large portion of it, and the people get nothing or but little (sometimes, in the former case, a Chief may accept a present from the settler when he applies to have the work done, but it has no reference to the payment), and this has been a cause of great trouble and disaffection amongst the people; whereas the other has produced the opposite effect, and has proved a great boon to planters, both at the time of their first settlement, and in gathering in their crops, which perhaps mature suddenly, and but for the labour supplied in this way, very great loss would have been the consequence; and this is an arrangement with which the people are well pleased, as a native always likes to feel what he is doing has the approval of his Chief, and he feels also that he is protected from fraud, his Chief being in the capacity of curator as it were; and people will often refuse to do work, though willing enough to do it, and will refer the white man to their Chief, saying, "If you can arrange with him we will go."

A Chief will often exercise his "lala" authority for some special or public object: his people, or some portion of them want (say) a vessel, or he himself desires to purchase one, and arrangements are made accordingly, the amount, and time for it to be raised, are all talked over with his elders, and the portions of money or produce to be supplied by each district; when for a time a whole province may become so engaged. This has been a great convenience to Chiefs, and no serious infliction upon the people. But in some parts of the Group it has been carried to such excess that often for months the people have been engaged in purchasing something or other for their Chief, or paying a debt for some article or articles he has got from the trader, which, after a day or two's amusement therefrom he has thrown aside like a toy, while his people have been oppressed and enslaved through his faucies. Another and more commendable instance is, when I have known a Chief raise a whole province to clear an old road, or make a new and perhaps important one, and in this way 15 or 20 miles have been cleared in one day.

Another instance: during the late sickness, though it hardly is a case of pure "lala," but exemplifies the exercise of power. The Chief of Bua declared all gardens and food common property, as the people were suffering more from want of food than from disease, many having to go a considerable distance to their own gardens; thus, in a great calamity or public emergency, a Chief could exercise his authority, and it would be responded to by his people, and public good and convenience be conserved thereby.

It is hardly necessary to the present question to describe the exercise of the "lala" in times of war. It is then simply absolute over life and property through the whole community and over all they possess, but indemnities of war paid by the conquered party at the time or after are always divided amongst the warriors.

There

There are a few instances where "lala" is exercised over particular classes of the community, two are worthy of notice, viz., the fishing tribes, and the carpenters or the canoe building tribes. Each class considers itself specially and directly under the Chief's immediate command. The fishermen have a large share in preparing for the entertainment of visiting Chiefs, or for large gatherings on important occasions, and the fisherman's share in the divisions of property is always an important one. Turtle fishing is different from any other kind. A Chief desiring turtle caught sends first a whale's tooth to the tribe with a request that they will put down their net, which means "prepare for turtle fishing." As soon as the canoe with the net on board is afloat a large present is then made to them, when they proceed to work; the capture of the first fish is rewarded by a whale's tooth and other property, and each succeeding fish by some present with the addition of a whale's tooth, until the tenth is brought in, when a feast is given by the Chief for the fisherman, and considerable property presented, which ends the fishing for that occasion, unless the Chief wishes more caught, when the same thing is repeated. A Chief generally looks well to his fishermen, and sees that they are properly provided with canoes and other requisites. Fijian carpenters or canoe builders have been described as the lowest vassals of a Chief; whilst in some respect this may be true they nevertheless possess some very exceptional privileges, and, although they are only supposed to work when and where the Chief consents or directs, they are well paid for what they do, and are well cared for by the Chief himself, or whoever they may work for; but it is next to impossible to get them to do work (canoe building) excepting through their own Chief.

There is just one other form where the rights of exercising the "lala" appears to be recognised, and it is by levying a fine upon any district, town, or tribe, of either labour or produce, for some offence or misdemeanour, such as neglecting to carry out any special order or command of the Roko's, or that of a Buli, or Chief of a town, or for committing any act of violence, evil deed, or the destruction of the property of their neighbours, also for any act of disrespect to their own or other known Chief of rank; for any act of disloyalty, or for any disturbance amongst themselves. Any of those having been proved, after inquiry, a fine is inflicted, and the tribe, town, or district, as the case may be, do a certain amount of work, as roadmaking perhaps, or pay so much in kind to the Chief, who, if compensation has been awarded to the injured, hands over the amount, and retains the balance for a common or public purpose. I have known in cases of theft, when it was found impossible to discover the culprits, whose continued depredations became a common nuisance, the infliction of a fine upon the district or neighbouring towns, to compensate the losers, not only stop their doings, but as a rule lead to the discovery of the perpetrators; as the natives say, with considerable truth, it makes every innocent man a detective. It also acts most salutary upon neighbouring districts.

The above appear to be the various forms and instances, both regular and extraordinary, where the exercise of the "lala" is considered by natives as right, proper, legitimate, and honourable, to which the people readily respond and submit, this is so much so that whenever a trial has been made to do away with the "lala" as an institution, a greater difficulty has been experienced with the people than with the Chiefs. The latter say, "If we receive less property we shall simply have less to give away."

His Excellency will see that in the above descriptions I have sought to confine my remarks to the exercise of "lala" in its legitimate character, and have not noticed the voluntary and spontaneous contributions of the people to their Chiefs, which is so often spoken against by foreigners, who either do not understand it, or have the impression that it is simply the result of secretly conveyed intimation on the part of a Chief—which is altogether a mistake. Such expressions of sympathy and affection to a Chief are frequent and characteristic, and never pass unrewarded or unacknowledged by him. But it is entirely distinct from the "lala" and is simply and purely the expression of respect and regard the people consider their Chief's due.

Before closing this paper it will, however, be necessary to consider a few instances where the system of "lala" is perverted or the authority illegitimately used for sinister purposes, or where it is made the cloak for personal aggrandisement; and from these facts, no doubt, arises the cause of much disaffection, oppression, and evil amongst the people generally, and has led casual or outside observers to condemn the system altogether.

ABUSE IN THE EXERCISE OF CHIEF'S AUTHORITY.

The principal abuse is by High Chiefs' sons, and relatives of the Rokos' perhaps, and Chiefs of lower grades, or their retainers, who go about from place to place levying tribute—or, in other words, black mail—of all kinds of produce or native property, and who are never slow to make use of the Supreme Chief or Roko's name and authority, when such can be done with safety, to secure their object and oppress and impoverish the people. This kind of thing is not called "lala" but "vakasaurara," that is oppression or "forcibly taking away," and the perpetrators are called "nai vakacaea," or spoilers. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this will be to give an instance, and the following may be taken as a very general and common one, only varying of course in extent or degree, according to the number engaged, or means at their disposal:—

A young Chief will give out that he is going to visit a certain place, for a named purpose, which is always made as plausible as possible. It may be to carry out some previously made arrangement with the Chief or people of the place, perhaps to attend some "solevu" (a reciprocal change of property), or to receive some sail-mats, native cloth or sinnet. Presents are accordingly prepared to give in exchange, and when possible the Supreme Chief's sanction is obtained to the proposed visit. As the preparations proceed the number of the party generally increases, and five or even ten canoes leave where two or three only were intended. The start is finally made, and as they proceed along the coast—in, generally, very short stages—at every place where they put in food is prepared for them, and a system of begging commences, each appealing to his friend for something to add to his portion of the presents to be presented when they reach their destination. Many of them have probably started without an article, trusting to this resource as they pass along, which party, if it be a strong one is generally successful. It not infrequently happens that the Chief—the head of the party—may have sent to some particular

particular town or district, that they are to pass by, saying that he is about to visit such a place, and that he wishes them to help him and supply some property, naming, probably, some article or articles common to that town or district, which of course they accordingly prepare, and I have known a visiting party like this leave their homes without anything at all, but, by the time they have got to their destination, be well laden.

A messenger will generally have preceded them to announce their coming, so that as soon as they arrive food is presented in great quantities, to provide which the whole district may have been laid under contribution. The day for the exchange of presents, or property, is generally fixed early, as the hosts do not as a rule wish to prolong the stay of their visitors. In the meantime each individual of the visiting party, from the Chief downwards, has been doing a little business on his own account, as making a private present to some friend or family, which brings in return personal supplies of food, and on leaving a like return present.

Of course the great object of these visits is to enrich themselves, especially the Chief, as, in Fiji, property is power, and while they seek to represent that it is fair barter, all sorts of expedients are resorted to to obtain the desired object, and, when the party is large, they are more or less successful.

A very common one is for the visiting party to take offence at some supposed slight to a Chief, inattention, or neglect to comply with a desire, or some ancient and hereditary custom, when the Chief will be told he must punish said offending individual, family, town, or towns, as the case may be, and the fine will probably be named as a compensation for the insult. Non-compliance would bring down reprisals upon the Chief, their host,—and his town seldom goes entirely free. But, should said Chief himself have a grudge against the supposed offending party, he will probably ask for some assistance from his visitors, which is always readily granted, as such marauding greatly adds to their booty, and scenes of the most inhuman and dissolute character are enacted under the plea that a Chief's dignity and authority must be supported, no matter at what cost to the commoners. If such visits be at all prolonged the greatest distress and even famine often prevails for months after.

Their return home is much of the same character; wherever they are not checked by some authority, fear and consternation precede their approach. They sweep away the animals, food, and property of their people, insulting and dishonouring every domestic tie, and the distress and trouble they leave behind is as the passing over of a scourge or calamity. Surprise may be felt by some that the people submit to such outrage with such apparent indifference; but it must be remembered that, being the action of their own or perhaps other high Chiefs, the fear of retribution checks anything like resistance even on the part of those not absolutely the subjects of their spoilers, and every subterfuge is adopted to show it to be right and proper conduct in a Chief. It may be said, is not this rather an extreme case. I do not think so; but, on the contrary, such cases have been of common and frequent occurrence, and vary but little excepting perhaps in their extent,—that is to say, it may be the act and conduct of a single Chief, or of a Chief accompanied by two hundred armed retainers. In any case it is an outrageous abuse of authority and has no relation to “lala.”

Another case may be given, which is, when a Chief for some cause or other has got into debt and is unable to pay, and he adopts one of two expedients, or in some cases both, to raise funds. He “lavaka's” produce of some kind or other. It may be at per head among the males, or so much from each town. In some cases, if the amount be large, a Chief will appeal for assistance to a Chief of another province, who will generally accede to the request. In this way large districts are kept all but exclusively at such work for months, to the neglect of their usual avocations, which, if it occur during planting season, causes gardens to be neglected, and consequently after the debt is paid more or less distress prevails amongst the people. The second case is the “lava-ing” of men to go and work under certain arrangements, say so much per head to be paid to the Chief supplying the men, or perhaps the men's wages are hypothecated, and in such cases towns and districts have been thinned of all their able-bodied and young men, sometimes for from two or three years. I would here notice that this is different altogether from the ordinary mode of obtaining Fijian labour, where presents are generally made to the Chief and divided amongst the relatives of the men leaving, when both parties are well enough satisfied. Each of the above forms of “lava-ing” men is of modern origin, and the result of settlement of whites in the group.

The foregoing is as nearly as possible a description of what is generally supposed to be the institution of “lala,” but which—far from being “lala”—is in reality simply the arbitrary exercise of authority of Chiefs over the people, an authority probably pure enough originally, but corrupted from time to time by capricious and tyrannical rival Chiefs.

With His Excellency's permission I would submit the following suggestions on the question of “lala,” the entire abolition of which, for the present at least, I should regard as premature, and likely to involve a vast amount of discontent and trouble. When fully understood it is not repugnant to civilised forms of government, and with all its ramifications is an agency that may be turned to good and useful account in the present and future government of the Group. It is well and thoroughly understood and recognised by the people as their Chief's right. In order to prevent abuses, the system should be a little better defined and its operation limited. It suits the present condition of the people, and, as far as the Chiefs are concerned, has right and usage on its side. Such customs can hardly be abrogated without some equivalent:—

1. If all the Chiefs of whatever grade were allowed to exercise the right of “lala” over their own particular Province, Tribes, and Qali only, in all matters of gardens, house buildings, or domestic requirements, the Chief in each case complying with the conditions understood and fixed by usage, I believe it would tend more to promote the industry of the people than any form of higher civilisation that can just now be introduced.

I have heard some of the best and most considerate Chiefs say, “Remove the ‘lala’ and our people will not only become insolent but they will soon die out from want, filth, and improvidence. We, Chiefs, have to care as much for their common wants of every day life as we have for the necessities of the

the state." It will be well that each Roko be held responsible that the "lala" is not abused by inferior Chiefs in his province.

2. In reference to any person not complying with a "lala," I would suggest that a Native District Council deal with any refractory individual for disobedience of local regulations, as such a Council is best acquainted with the rights and privileges of both Chiefs and people.

There can be no doubt but such individual cases will arise, and the conduct of one insolent and turbulent fellow, if unchecked, does much harm in a district.

3. The indiscriminate taking away of food and animals by individual Chiefs or their retainers, is no doubt an evil, and ought not to be allowed. Of course, under the direct authority of the Roko and for public purposes, the case is different, as the people contribute readily.

4. No Chief of whatever rank should be allowed to "lala" out of his own province or district, not even when he possesses hereditary or customary rights to do so, though this is a case where some difficulty may arise for a time. But much more serious difficulties are to be apprehended from the allowance of the practice than from its prohibition. A Chief having such rights or privileges in more than one province can always elect which he will reside in, that is, of course, if he is not an official.

The custom of Rokos helping each other in times of any special effort is open to most serious objections, both from its tending to increase the burdens of the people, and liability to cause jealousy amongst those Rokos not actually engaged.

There is another custom so nearly allied to the above, which is known as begging, but in a Fijian sense it means much more, as the party solicited is not always free to refuse, and a native is always ashamed to refuse to give anything asked of him. For this last reason only they will not infrequently give, if solicited, all they possess.

It would be difficult no doubt to introduce any prohibitory laws, but a word to the Rokos for them to discourage begging as much as possible will do good, and there can be no doubt the custom will soon die out.

SOLEVU-ING.

Before closing this paper, the custom of solevu-ing ought perhaps to be noticed, though it does not come under the head of "lala," it is very nearly allied to, and often calls it forth, and as there are some evils connected with the custom that need correction, perhaps a short description would be best. A Chief or Chiefs, or the people of a Province, District, or Town, being in want of some articles will send to those of another Province, District, or Town, and request them to solevu, naming the articles they are in want of, and perhaps the articles they will bring in return. This being accepted, the day will be fixed, the proposing parties, unless otherwise specially arranged, visit their friends to present their property, and receive what is given in return, and both lots are again divided out to the contributors only, so that it will be seen the custom partakes very much of the nature of an ordinary market or fair, and so far there does not appear any objection, but rather the contrary, as it promotes emulation and industry, besides facilitating the interchange of the products of different places. But there are two evils that may be pointed out, and which the Rokos can with little trouble correct. One is the preparation for these solevus so entirely absorbs the time and attention of the people as at times seriously to interfere and obstruct the carrying out of provisional or local regulations, and the second is when the visiting parties prolong their stay, and thereby cause their entertainment to become oppressive to their friends; and this is particularly the case when they live at such a distance as to necessitate their travelling by water, when foul winds may detain them on a coast for weeks together.

DAVID WILKINSON.

SETTLEMENT OF NATIVE LANDS.

Legislative Council, Fiji, July 6th and 7th, 1915.

Write my compliments - R.H.P. 11/8.15

MR. SCOTT.—I move :

That, in the opinion of this Council, with the object of attaining some finality regarding the land question, it is advisable that the Government should immediately appoint a Commission to advise and report upon the best policy to be adopted for opening up for settlement the native lands of the Colony.

I considered, Sir, somewhat carefully the matter before I determined on that motion, because I realise that I am again opening up for consideration a very large question, but one I think that is deserving of the earnest consideration of every one. That there should be some attempt at finality being attained no one can deny. I do not propose this morning to go back and argue as to the true construction and meaning of the fourth clause of the Deed of Cession, it has already at various times been argued at length, almost *ad nauseam*. But I propose to trace somewhat briefly the history of the native land of this Colony, and to point out to the Council the present conditions in connection with it. We all are aware that in 1874 when the Colony was ceded to Her late Majesty the idea was that all lands which were not at the time in the occupation or needed for the use of the natives should be given over to Her Majesty. But I shall show shortly, and I desire to show it very clearly, that Her Majesty's Government then, through the Government of this Colony in 1880, I think, altered the whole policy and gave the natives to understand that the natives owned the whole of the land. Successive Secretaries of State have maintained that policy. I wish at the outset to say that I do not advocate in this House or elsewhere that the true ownership of native lands is vested in other than the natives, although my own opinion from a legal view may be different. I realise that, as the Secretary of State has laid it down that, as the natives for many years have been accepted as the true owners of the land, no useful purpose can be attained by arguing otherwise, but the object of my motion is to bring more strongly to the Secretary of State's knowledge the appalling conditions governing native lands to-day. The Government is realising the position I think, and is doing all in its power to divest the native of the control of his land in his own interest. My proposal is that the whole of the surplus native lands of this Colony—that is land that is not required for actual use by the natives, should be absolutely controlled by the

Government—the Government acting as trustees. This is not the first time that the question has been raised, but at the same time I think that the time is ripe to indicate to the Secretary of State—and I hope that this Council unanimously agrees with me—that some step should be taken now to finally deal with the question not only in the interest of the whole community but in the interest of the natives themselves. It has been said to me by the Native Commissioner : “ But why should the Government step in and take control of the native lands? How would you like your estate to be managed for you by the Government? ” I answer that question by saying : “ that if I managed my small estate in the same way as the Fijians manage theirs, then the Government would be welcome to manage it for me.” If I may be permitted, I desire first of all, without intending to weary the Council unduly, to refer the Council to a debate in this House. On the 3rd November, 1909, the then Governor of the Colony, Sir Everard im Thurn, said :—

Since I last spoke to you—a year ago—you have had the opportunity, during my absence in England, of reading in printed form the most recent despatches which had passed between the Secretary of State and myself on that subject ; and you have realised that Lord Crewe had been unable fully to approve the view which, on your behalf, I had put before him on the subject of unused native lands. On pressing my point home, I found that practically all that seems essential can be granted to us—that is power to this Government to assume control in the interests of the natives of all the unalienated lands which these natives do not themselves use and are unable to use. I had hoped even at this session to have put before you a Bill to give effect to this arrangement ; but the difficulties are still too great, and you must wait, as patiently as you may, until next session. Meanwhile I propose, as soon as the pressure of work caused by the present session is over, to invite certain gentlemen, European and native, official and unofficial, to meet me in informal committee, and there to devise the best means we can to transfer the control of the land to the Government, with due observance of the conditions required by the Secretary of State in the interests of the natives. Having now, as you are aware, acquainted myself as fully as possible with the conditions of the problem to be solved, I shall retain in my own hands the chairmanship and control of the committee. I may add that the two chief difficulties remaining to be solved are—(1) how best to use the net price of these lands in the interests of the natives ; and (2) the question as to the form of tenure—leasehold or freehold—under which the lands treated by the committee should be held. I have now great hope that as the result of our labours we shall be able in May next to put before you a scheme, which you may be able to approve, for the final settlement of this long-vexed question.

That was a part of His Excellency's message addressed to the Council on the 3rd November, 1909. The subject I am putting before you is the same question to which Sir Everard

im Thurn made reference in his message, and the committee which I am now asking for is a similar committee to that the Governor said he would appoint in 1909. But to this day no such committee has been appointed. I am not blaming Sir Everard im Thurn in not appointing the committee, because we all know that he became seriously indisposed and shortly afterwards resigned from the Governorship of this Colony. If in 1909 Sir Everard im Thurn realised the importance of having the surplus native lands brought under the control of the Government, so much so that he had promised to appoint a committee—His Excellency, I believe, devoted more time to the land question than any other Governor, up to Your Excellency's time—I think that there should be no further delay and we ought to have that committee appointed to-day. In 1910 this question was again brought up, and I desire to refer Your Excellency as part of this debate to the whole debate of this Council on pages 43-48 of *Hansard*. I refer particularly to page 43 of the debate of Council, June, 1910, when I moved the following resolution:—

That in the opinion of this Council the time has arrived for the Government to acquire the waste (unoccupied) native lands of the Colony so as to promote settlement.

Towards the end of the page 46 of the Debates it will be observed that I offered to alter the wording of that motion so as to read "assume control of" instead of the word "acquire." That resolution, Sir, however, was negatived. I am only quoting that, Sir, as showing that in 1910 the same question was raised, and the Colonial Secretary then stated that the Government could not accept it because every consideration was being given to the question, and in his opinion so much alienated land was still unoccupied. I may here indicate that the figures as supplied to me show the agricultural lands of this Colony (native owned), of lands that are capable of being turned to good use, approximate an area of 4,000,000 acres, I believe. The alienated land—that is land owned other than by the natives—totals 250,000 acres. So that the relative proportion of the alienated land to the native land is small; and although I agree that in many districts there is some alienated land still unoccupied, I think it is the Government's duty in the interest of the Colony and of the natives themselves to take control of that large area of native land and to advertise it so that it will be brought to the notice of the public. If these lands were controlled by the Government, they should be surveyed and classified and reports made on them so that assistance in every way possible should be given to applicants. I

think that would tend largely to help immigration to the Colony. It is impossible to attract immigrants unless you first classify your land and have it surveyed: in fact, give every encouragement. I admit at once that both these courses are going to cost a lot of money, but how on earth are we going to say what there is to offer if we do not adopt this course? How can regulations governing the leasing of lands be made with any likelihood of success, unless the Government is in the position of being able to describe the character of the land? To make regulations while conditions remain as they are is to place "the cart before the horse," so to speak. In discussing the land question on 9th June, 1911, (*Hansard*, page 44) Sir Henry May, the then Governor of the Colony, said:—

You have talked about a land-tax; well, I have gone into that matter pretty thoroughly and the way the land question is situated here I do not see how you can do it at the present time. This Colony has been handicapped very seriously by the way the land question has been muddled. The man who disregarding the specific instructions of the Secretary of State when this Colony was ceded had the audacity, I might say, of following on a line of his own, did this Colony a great injury, and the people that he has injured more than any other are the Fijians who were the very people he thought to benefit. If the land question had been properly dealt with you would have had a land tax and it would spread over every single occupier of the land, and you would have a considerable area of Crown land which would enable you to develop the Colony in the proper manner. But there is no use wasting time discussing the subject. It will have to be gone into further.

Now we have up to 1911, on the authority of the Governor, not advanced—that the land question had been muddled and the matter would have to be gone into further. I am now endeavouring to carry it a step further. In 1912 a move forward was made by His Excellency Sir Henry May in the passing of Ordinance No. 3 of 1912. This Ordinance and Ordinance No. 5 of 1905 are the two statutes that control native lands of this Colony. Under section 8 of the latter Ordinance, Your Excellency is aware that before native land can be leased an application has to be made to the District Commissioner, who sends that application to the District Council for the consideration of the natives. The District Council then debate upon it. But prior to that there is a set of circumstances that have to be gone through by the would-be applicant, who has no idea when he starts where it is going to end. That application, if agreed to by the District Council, has to be sent to the Roko, who has to indicate his approval to the District Commissioner who in turn sends it to Suva. The Native Commissioner and the Commissioner of Lands then make a report on it to the Executive Council, and the Executive Council can either approve or disapprove of the application, and by the time this procedure is over the applicant

deserves, in my opinion, all the land he can get. It will be seen that the procedure being so circuitous tends to nothing else but delay land settlement. In 1912 the Governor passed legislation creating Commissioners to inquire into the ownership of native lands. On the second reading debate of that Bill on 22nd May, 1912, (*Hansard*, pages 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30) I desire to particularly refer the Council to. I then again gave my views on this subject, but do not propose to inflict that speech in full upon the House now. I desire, however, that Your Excellency will consider my address then as part of this debate. Shortly, that is the position as we find it to-day—no further advanced than in 1907. Now, to induce the Secretary of State to alter our land policy—and I mean by altering to take control of these lands for the benefit of the Colony as a whole—we will have to show no doubt to the Secretary of State that economic pressure exists. I think the term economic pressure has been used by the Secretary of State. On the subject of economic pressure I would refer the Council to a debate which took place in this Council on the 14th October, 1907, (*Hansard*, pages 33 and 34). It will be within the recollection of members that an area of 6,800 acres at Rewa known as "Wainibokasi," was applied for as a leasehold, and some of the natives agreed to it but others did not. In dealing with that question in Council, when it was raised by a motion introduced by Mr. McRae, the then member for Suva, in the following words (*Hansard*, page 30):

That a more comprehensive measure of legislation is necessary to acquire by resumption for purpose of settlement undeveloped native-owned lands.

The then Governor of the Colony said (*Hansard* page 33):

Lord Stanmore put in the forefront of his objections to our proceedings here the fact that we have sold or leased the greater part of the delta of the Rewa against the will of the natives. That simply referred to the Wainibokasi land, the acreage of which was 6,800 acres. He said that he objected not only to the extent of the native land which we had sold but also to the fact that we had done it against the will of the natives. Surely if there was ever a case in which we yielded to the natives or to a certain number of them it was that Wainibokasi case. . . . It would have been one of the greatest and best moves that had ever been made in this Colony, and now I am going to tell the man in the street the reason it fell through. It was simply and solely because certain native owners strongly objected. I have no doubt if it had been possible for me to have put the proposition in the form which it had then reached before this Council that every member—official, elected, and, what is much more important in this particular instance, the two native members—would have been entirely in favour of it—very strongly in favour of it. It is not the home Government, but it is certain people here and at home who are always fighting, as they profess in the interests of the natives, new developments here. Assuming that they are fighting in the interest of the natives and that they succeed in preventing the Government from getting land from the natives it leaves the local Government in the

invidious position of having to defend the native interests by yielding unduly to the natives, or even a minority of them, and this is, I am afraid, what happened in the Wainibokasi case.

And then he continued:

I had hoped that the Wainibokasi business had not finally and definitely fallen through, but until the people are educated and the home Government is correctly informed as to the right position of affairs we cannot carry more legislation that we have got.

There we have it, Sir, as far back as 1907, where the granting of this land would have been in the interests of the natives, but this large area was refused by the natives because—and because only—they wished to refuse it. The then Governor of the Colony said publicly it would have been in the interests of the natives to have leased the land, but the Government were powerless. Very little of that land has been taken up since. Just think for a moment what the natives have lost in rent all these years. Now, Sir, what do we find since 1907? Even so recently as last month certain natives have refused to lease their land, and they give no reason for it at all. They simply say "we do not want to lease the land, we are the owners of the land, we do not want to lease it." The recent case I refer to is that of a planter. He had planted a considerable area of land. There was a tramway or a railway laid down within about a mile of his plantation. When the planter had planted up that area he had a verbal promise that as soon as he wanted to communicate the plantation with the main tramway line he could have a narrow strip of land for the purpose of getting his cane away. When he wanted the strip the natives point blank refused it to him. They said, "not at any price." And yet he only wanted a strip. There was no reason given, Sir, at all; and if anyone can tell me that this state of affairs should be allowed to continue, then all I can say is that one holding such views has not the interests of this Colony or the natives at heart. When natives through pique will not lease a piece of land that is serving no useful purpose to themselves but will be useful to some one else, then I think it is time the Government stepped in and said: "we are going to control your estate." There are many other cases, too, which clearly indicate the economic pressure that exists. I have shown that two Governors have publicly indicated that the Government should take control of the native land. I have shown that public men since 1907 have indicated this course. And as I said before, I have no quarrel at all in this matter with your Excellency and your immediate advisers, because we all know that Your Excellency is doing all you can to bring under the notice of the Secretary of State the present unsatisfactory position of the

land. I do not for one moment say, Sir, that the Secretary of State is not giving this matter his careful consideration, but what I do say is this, that with all due respect to his opinion the opinion of the man on the spot which has been acquired by local experience is worth more than the experience that it is possible to obtain in the Colonial Office without local knowledge. I hope, Sir, that you will be good enough to transmit to the Secretary of State the whole of the debate on this question for his consideration. Now, Sir, there is one other point which I want to deal with, and that is in connection with the report of the Committee appointed recently by the Indian Government to inquire into the conditions controlling Indian immigration. The very valuable report by the honourable Mr. McNeill and Mr. Chiman Lal, dealing with the conditions of Indian immigrants in British colonies has, as you know, Sir, just come to hand; and I propose to refer the House to a few of its paragraphs. I think I can safely say that the outstanding feature of that report can be summed up in one word, and that is "colonisation." It says: "Colonise your Indian immigrants and your troubles are over as far as immigration is concerned." That is how I read it, Sir. We are all aware, Sir, that unless we have an ample and full supply of what I may term cheap labour for this Colony, the Colony will run headlong into bankruptcy, because it is vital to the interests of this Colony that there should be an abundance of labour. It has been said, Sir, that our labour supply is the most important question that we have to deal with. It is, however, so interwoven with the land question that you cannot separate it. What do the Indian Commissioners say on the subject? In Part II of their Report, at page 261, they say as follows:

The settlement of free Indians on land in Fiji has been retarded by the fact that most of the land is owned by the Fijians, who practise a very inferior form of cultivation in an insignificant portion of the cultivatable land. The greater part of the land has been waste from time immemorial. To obtain a lease for even a short period much bargaining and the adoption of a circuitous procedure have hitherto been necessary. The Acting Commissioner of Lands was good enough to summarise the facts regarding land settlement in the following note.

And then the Commissioner of Lands has indicated all the facts as to the procedure when a man wants to lease even a small piece of land. The Report continues as follows on page 262:

Recently, however, the needless difficulty and expense of the present procedure was recognised and at the time of our visit

[in September, 1913, I believe]

revised regulations dealing with the grant of lands awaited only the sanction and approval of the Secretary of State. The needs of Indian settlers

were considered, but existing customs regarding leases seem to have been given undue weight. The most important change is that negotiations for leases will be made solely through Government officials, and no land will be leased unless the native owners first hand it over to Government. This is a very great improvement as negotiations were often tedious and costly, tenures were insecure, and in some cases rents were unreasonably high. The presence of Indians has raised the rental value of land in Fiji very greatly. If only Fijian labour were available rents would necessarily be nominal. It is essential that the Indian, whose labour creates the value of land, should have facilities for obtaining holdings from the very great area of waste land available at rents which reflect the present economic value and are not merely the effect of a State-aided monopoly.

If I may pause for one moment, Sir, on this part of the report I should like to say that the regulations that are shortly to be brought into force will, it appears to me, still further militate against the leasing of land. If by regulation the Government is going to say to the person who is recognised as the owner of the land, "We will not allow you to lease any land except that which you have handed over to us," then the land is as far off from settlement as ever. The only land the native will offer voluntarily is the land of very little use. All lands already handed over by the resolutions of two Great Councils of Chiefs have been found to be of very little value. Later the same report at page 263 says:—

In the first place the land is unsurveyed and the applicant after he gets a lease must employ and pay a licensed surveyor. He must in his application describe the unsurveyed land and have it valued by the local magistrate, who will communicate with the Lands Commissioner who will fix the rent and upset price or premium from which the cost of issue of the lease and of the registration are to be deducted. These leases of native lands are apparently put up for sale whether one or more persons apply for the land, and the sale purchaser employs the surveyor.

(Here comes the point I wish to emphasise):

It would obviously be much quicker and cheaper to have the whole blocks officially surveyed, subdivided and assessed, apart from the much greater accuracy of both surveying and mapping.

As I indicated earlier in my address, before this land question can be settled it is necessary that the land be surveyed and sub-divided. We find now that is in accordance with the views of the Indian Commissioners. The Commissioners say in effect the easy acquisition of land by the Indian is a *sine qua non* to the continuance of Indian immigration. The final conclusion is definite and clear when the Commissioners say:—

However, what we wish definitely to recommend is that emigration to Fiji should be conditional on the creation of facilities for the occupation of land by Indian settlers on conditions such as we propose. We also think that lessees under existing leases should be protected from the risk of having to pay extortionate premia for the renewal of their leases on general conditions identical with those under which new settlers receive grants.

There you are, Sir; that is their final recommendation so far as Indian immigration goes. Unless you can colonise your immigrants, unless you can give them every

facility, by effecting a survey, subdivision and classification of the land, the Colony will lose its Indian population. The Commissioner of Lands' office should be the one where a man can go and say "How many acres of land have you got to lease?"—where in fact every information should be to hand. Under no circumstances should the native be the first person to be approached with regard to the leasing of land. I know it is going to cost money, but in my opinion it is the only solution to the problem existing to-day. Your Excellency has been good enough to refer to a small committee the Bill dealing with the tenure of native lands. The Commission (or committee) I ask for in my motion should be that same committee, to obviate the necessity of making a second report. The same committee should be appointed to consider the whole question, so that a full report be given to Your Excellency. The whole question of native lands and customs should be gone into, and also the principles, conditions, and merits of that Bill, and I have no doubt that some satisfactory solution could in that way be arrived at. I do not propose at this stage to touch on the merits of that Bill, because I am only endeavouring to support the principle that I advocate in the appointment of a committee, and I am trying to show that economic pressure exists. These are the facts upon which I rely for Your Excellency to appoint a committee. I am aware that you have received instructions from the Secretary of State that the Land Bill is to pass through this House more or less on the lines of the Bill already introduced, but unless the Secretary of State is going to listen and take some advice from people who have taken a great deal of interest and given a great deal of thought to the question, then the position will be no more forward when we get the Land Bill or the regulations that are to come into force in 1916. The position, Sir, is a very acute one. I personally have had experience of men with capital who have come here and chosen native lands but have gone away dissatisfied because the natives refused either to lease their lands for reasons best known to themselves. The conditions in some cases imposed were so unreasonable and the method of acquiring the lease so circuitous that they have left the Colony rather than be bothered so much when they could get land elsewhere. Because the land is not surveyed or classified here intending settlers on arrival have to open up negotiations with the natives and the result has always been unsatisfactory. There is no doubt, Sir, that that has happened time and time again, and I can refer you to the Commissioner of

Lands to support me. We must now consider the question from the most serious point of view. Is the time ripe for the intervention of the State or not? Are we perfectly satisfied with the way in which native land is being disposed of? I want to specially state to the Native members of this Council—and please mark my words—that I have no intention to take from the native the rights and benefits that are to accrue to him from the leasing of his lands, but the management only of those lands I want to be put into trustees' hands. I wish the Native members of this Council to clearly understand that there is no attempt on my part or on the part of anyone else to take away from the native any of his land: but simply the management of the estate must be taken away from him in his own interest. On the 14th May, 1908, (*Hansard*, page 7) Sir Everard im Thurn, the then Governor of the Colony, quoted the words of Lord Elgin, the then Secretary of State, spoken in the House of Lords, which are as follows:

There can be no doubt whatever that under the Treaty by which we assumed the protection of Fiji it was laid down in the fourth clause that the sole proprietary of all lands not shown to be then alienated, or not then in the actual use or occupation of some chief or tribe, or not actually required for the future support of some chief or tribe should vest in Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors.

And His Lordship added:

I have not been able to trace any later enactment altering that state of the law, but the explanation may possibly be found in the custom of communal property.

I have repeated those words here to-day as showing that the natives have been treated most liberally—in fact they have been given something that they are not entitled to, and if what has been given to them, viz:—their land—is managed so badly by themselves, surely it is not too much to ask that the State—who is really the owner—should manage it for them and in their own interests. Land boards would have to be appointed in the various provinces. The District Commissioner of course would form one of the board to decide how much land was necessary for the maintenance of the various *mataqalis*. When that was decided upon, Sir, a description and plan by surveyors could be prepared of the balance of the land that was left, and it would be possible that the whole of the balance could be leased to applicants. The medium of communication between the native and the applicant should be the Lands Department. These, Sir, shortly, are the reasons which I urge for the acceptance of this motion. I regret if I have unduly kept this Council, but I feel very strongly upon this question, and speaking for myself I am prepared to give up a great deal of my time to a committee such as I

suggest. If that committee is appointed I venture to think a scheme will be evolved which will induce a steady stream of immigration which is essential to our welfare. Then and then only will this Colony become as it should, the centre of trade and commerce in the Pacific and one of the most productive and wealthy outposts of His Majesty's dominions. I commend the motion to the favourable consideration of honourable members of this House.

MR. CROMPTON.—I second the motion, Your Excellency. I have spoken to the mover and he does not mind substituting the word "committee" for the word "commission" because I gather from his address that he was asking for a committee, and he submitted that the committee appointed to consider the Lands Bill before this Council should be the committee to whom the whole question should be referred. As to the necessity for the appointment of a committee, I do not think there is the slightest doubt. I do not think that any person in this House, if he had a free vote, would vote against this motion: they may vote against the personnel of the proposed committee, but not against the appointment of a committee. It has been stated over and over again in this House some definite action should be taken. No single individual in this Colony can arrive at anything like a satisfactory solution of this question because there are so many side-issues to be settled. All points require very careful consideration by persons who know the subject well, and for that reason there must be a report by some persons who are interested in the subject and can give time to it. All the Governors of this Colony who have given their attention to the question of native lands have settled it to their satisfaction. One has only to remember that in 1892 Sir John Bates Thurston introduced a Land Bill, which was going to settle the matter. But the reason the question has never been satisfactorily settled is that there has been no proper report as to what should be settled, and the Bill now before this House is no better than its predecessors. I do not think the Government would support that Bill in its present form. We have made no attempt up to the present time to settle this question of native lands. A Bill drawn to meet one or two points is not sufficient. The Bill before the House is called and is supposed to be a consolidating Bill; it consolidates nothing, Sir. Its only effect is to perpetuate the difficulties which exists. In another twenty years, if you go on with legislation in the same way, you will have the same difficulties to meet as exist to-day. You have to consider whether it is

advisable to leave the decision of letting land to a Council which consists probably of nineteen or twenty members who have no interest in the land at all. The whole subject will need consideration, and the whole matter should be referred to a committee. Such chaos now exists that no one person can deal with the matter himself. If the Council approves of the motion, the whole subject can be discussed by a small committee, and I am sure that the chairman of the proposed committee is a man in whom the members of the committee will have confidence and he will give the deliberations of the committee every consideration. The appointment of a small committee interested and keen on the question is the only way of solving the difficulty. The report would merely put into writing the position of the land matters as they exist to-day and would offer suggestions for the remedies. It is not my intention to spend a lot of time talking upon the native land question, but I must say that I am prepared to do what I can to assist to solve the difficulty. The whole subject will have to be submitted to the committee. It will be necessary to give that committee full power to discuss and report, because unless you do so there will be no beneficial results. The mover of this motion referred to persons who have left the Colony because they could not get land. I do not think that it should be necessary for us to point out instances of persons who had been unable to obtain land when they applied for it. We should be in a position to induce persons to come here and take up land. We should be able to advertise our lands in Australia, New Zealand and England to induce settlers to come here. It is quite foolish to suggest to any man at the present time that he can come here and get native land. The position will not improve until you appoint a committee, to whom the whole subject could be referred, and by whom it could be fully considered and discussed at length. The ownerships of native lands are to be based on custom, but the customs have never been ascertained and at the present time our land legislation appears to me to be suspended in mid-air—it has no foundation of any kind whatever. I have read some reports of the Native Land Commission and particularly paper No. 27, to which I had the pleasure of being referred. Any one reading paper 27, which was compiled by the Chairman of the Native Lands Commission, must see the difficulties with which he has to contend, and that is because the law which he is required to enforce is incomplete. There is one thing which the Bill should do, and that is, it should provide that customs that have been approved of by the Native

Lands Commission should be codified and should be final and binding, because unless you do this the whole work of your Commission is going to be useless. There are many other important matters which require consideration, but as I have said before it is impossible for one man to prepare a scheme, and if Your Excellency appoints or approves of the committee as suggested I am sure we will have very many beneficial results. I cannot conceive what possible objection there can be to the motion as the object of it is to obtain a report which this House could consider.

THE COMMISSIONER OF LANDS.—

Your Excellency, in replying to the motion before the House I desire not so much to touch upon the general question proposed by the honourable Mr. Scott, as to remove some misapprehensions in the course of his address. He refers to difficulties in securing native land in the Colony, and supports his case by quoting examples in which natives have caused very productive agricultural development schemes to fall through. He refers to the Wainibokasi case as an example of this class. That land would have yielded £10,000 or £15,000 of rent, and 16,000 tons of sugar, yet because the natives' idea of the value of the land was a higher one than that which was offered by the applicant, the negotiations fell through. When it is simply a question between lessee and lessor, the matter falls through because they are unable to arrive at a satisfactory rent. He said that the natives in this Colony have 4,000,000 acres of land, and 140,000 acres only have been leased so far. The mover states that he himself controls a considerable area of land. I venture to state that of that area there are still a few thousands of acres vacant, and good offers have been made for them but have been declined, because the rents offered by the applicants were not always equal to those placed upon them by the mover. The honourable member gives one the idea that the only method of obtaining land is to approach the native owners and to enter into negotiations with them, and to resort to intrigue and bribery. It is true that at one time that was the only method; but the Government decided to adopt the method of acquiring land from the native owners, and throwing it open to settlement. Some little work has been done, Sir, in this direction. There are 120,000 acres in the Colony, surveyed and classified, and they are open to settlement within 24 hours. It is only a question of putting it up to auction. It may seem strange to adopt this course, but it is done to remove any possibility of any settler receiving special concessions, and it was there-

fore essential that as a matter of form it should be put up to public auction, for a nominal upset price. In only one instance in twelve months was there competition. In addition to this 120,000 acres there are available for settlement, 61,914 acres of land, held by the Crown, which have been been advertised and classified and surveyed and are open to immediate settlement. Sub-leases are offered on terms which have been advertised. Now it might seem that 180,000 acres out of 4,000,000 is a small thing, but when it is remembered that only 140,000 acres have been taken up in the last 40 years on native leasehold it will be seen that the Department is 40 years ahead of settlement. These lands, Sir, are not entirely of one class and they are suited for various forms of agriculture. The rainfall varies from 40 to 140 inches. They are suitable for the cultivation of banana, cocoa, coffee, cattle, or any other other similar product. It has often been asked why people should go to the natives at all for land, when they can have it so easily from the Crown, but it is impossible for the Crown to select all those areas in such suitable localities as to please everyone. One settler wanted to be within two miles from Suva so that he could send his children to school. Another wanted to have his property so situated that he could come from New Zealand, inspect it, and return back to New Zealand, within 10 days. We receive 60 letters a year from intending settlers. The best rubber land in the Colony is in a zone on Vanualevu, about 140 miles from Suva. There are 30,000 acres suitable for rubber and it has been open to settlement from 3 to 4 years, and yet only 3,000 acres have so far been taken up. The better lands in the vicinity of sugar mills have already been absorbed, and settlement has arrived now at that point, when it is necessary to go further afield to obtain suitable land. This touches upon settlement by Europeans. With regard to the assistance given by the Government to Indian settlement, the Commissioners appointed by the Indian Government to inquire into and report upon Indian immigration in this island, have touched very fully on the question, and they expressed the desire that Indian immigrants should be given better facilities for taking up land. I submit, Sir, that the Government have furthered this very desirable end in every way by placing in the way of these Indians, lands suitable for cultivation. There are in the Colony now not less than 17,000 acres devoted to this purpose, that is for the settlement of Indians out of indenture. The settlement of Indians out of indenture has been a success, and the Government is desirous to extend it. These lands are in

17 different blocks, and 5,900 acres of the best land have been subdivided into 1,444 allotments of which 1,044 have been taken up. They are generally in the vicinity of other Indian settlements, but we have been confronted by the difficulty of obtaining suitable lands, in districts now settled with Indians. If the honourable member could show us a suitable area of even 400 acres in the province of Nadroga or Ba, I should be very glad indeed. In Lautoka the Indians are spread over the whole place, and within a radius of 8 miles there is scarcely a patch of five acres of suitable land which the Indians have not taken up. The Government was compelled therefore to go beyond the zone of Indian settlements to obtain land. An experiment was tried in the province of Macuata and very suitable blocks of land were acquired four years ago and thrown open for settlement, but not a single lot has been taken up, Sir. The Indian does not like to go far from other Indian settlements. His market is on the large estate where there are a large number of Indians under indenture to buy the rice, dhall, vegetables and fruit grown by him. This experiment was tried 40 miles from Labasa and 15 miles from the nearest large estate, and although it has a water frontage, the Indian does not take to transport by canoes, and that has been a failure. I do not think, Sir, that the Indian is the one who suffers, through the difficulties incidental to the present system of land tenure. He seems to be one who is a master in the art of intrigue, and negotiations between him and the Fijians always result in his having the pick of the land and he becomes the lessee with great simplicity. Not less than six hundred applications pass through the Lands Department annually mostly by Indians for small areas of land, and that means that Indian settlement is going on at the rate of from 3,000 to 5,000 acres per year. The Indians seem to be getting the best of the land and I think that were the land controlled by the Government such free selection would not be allowed and they would not fare so well. I do not wish to touch upon the general policy of the the land question, of whether the right of the natives to refuse applications should be questioned. I only wish to make these few remarks to indicate that there are other means of obtaining land for settlement.

MR. MARKS.—Your Excellency, I have listened with very great interest to the remarks of the honourable the Commissioner of Lands, but I am afraid he hardly touches the subject matter of this motion. In dealing with the report of the Commissioners from India he has explained very

clearly that Indian has been very well catered for, and that the colonisation scheme as suggested is not far from being carried out, but he is not satisfied that it is in the best interest of the natives and the Colony generally that the present system of obtaining land from the native is a good one. We have been told that we have 120,000 acres of land open for settlement, but we have not been told where this land is, and what it is adapted for. Now, I am perfectly satisfied in my own mind that a very large percentage of those 120,000 acres is valueless land. A little good land out of that may be devoted to agriculture, but I am right in saying that a very large percentage of that land is quite far away from means of communication. That the Indian is able to get his five or ten acres of land is very easy to understand. I know and I think that practically the majority of the gentlemen here know, that even the Indian to obtain a suitable block of land requires to resort to what may be termed analogically bribery, and the expense that the Indian undergoes to obtain his small piece of land is far more than people realise or imagine. Now, the honourable Mr. Scott referred to the Wainibokasi lease of some 6,000 odd acres, that was approved for in 1907, and the Commissioner of Lands has also referred to that block. He has also stated that the honourable Mr. Scott represents a very large freehold area of land lying idle because he cannot get the rent he requires. I am interested in many thousands of acres of freehold land in this Colony which, with very slight exceptions, is all under lease. Now, had this land at Wainibokasi been placed in the hands of the Government as trustees, and the native owners and the proposed tenant had not been able to agree, I have not the slightest doubt that the Commissioner of Lands and the proposed tenant would have been able to come to some arrangements by which that land would to-day have been occupied. The rental offered for the block of land in question was somewhere about £2,000 per annum. That was refused. This land is still lying waste. That was eight years ago, and very few acres of that block have been leased. Had it been leased the natives would have received £15,000 or £16,000 in rents, and the Colony would have benefited very materially. I think that a strong case has been made out to show that that is a very good instance for appointing the Government as their trustees, and to show that the natives are not able to look after their own interests. As regards the leasing of land, the Commissioner of Lands has referred to the fact that he has a very large area of land open for selection, and that it is a very simple matter for a man to go to his office to take up a

block of land. That block of land is to be put up by public auction. How and in what manner are these lands being dealt with? I can understand that freehold lands may be put up to auction, as it would be a step to prevent a man acquiring a valuable freehold under its value, but that, of course, is not necessary when it comes to a question of leasehold. A leasehold is for a period of 75 or 99 years, and there is a certain period on which a rent is fixed. On later periods the rent is assessed on the value of the land. Now, I am of opinion that to induce settlers to take up land that is lying idle, that it is immaterial what the initial rent would be, provided that the matter is fully sifted, and I take it that the Commissioner of Lands or the people appointed by the Commissioner of Lands would assess a fair rental on the block, and the intending settler would have a fair chance to develop his newly acquired leasehold. Now, as regards Indian settlement. The Commissioner of Lands states that the Indian will not go outside of certain areas. I am afraid that a very large percentage of the land that the Government holds is outside of these circles, the boundaries of which the Government will require to extend, and I have no doubt that these areas will sooner or later be taken up. The present system of dealing with the native lands is one that is to a great extent seriously affecting the prosperity of this Colony. Now, the prosperity of this Colony is interwoven with the prosperity of the natives, the natives as the freehold proprietors of the land. But, as the honourable Mr. Scott said, I do not think there is a member of this Council who thinks that we should endeavour to take this land from the natives. Higher authorities than ourselves have ruled that the land belongs to the natives, and therefore we must abide by that decision. But if the native owners are not sufficiently alive to their own interest, and prefer to allow their land to lie waste, then it is time for the Government to adopt a different policy and take charge of the land in the interest of the native. Other speakers have put the subject much more clearly than I can do, and I will say, in conclusion, that the motion has my entire support.

MR. HEDSTROM.—I desire to support this motion, and I would like also to congratulate the mover on the very clear and forceful way in which he has set out his case. I think he made out a very good case, and he has made excellent use of the opportunity offered him by the report of the Indian Commissioners, which strengthened his hands. After listening to him one might have wondered whether there was anything left to be said on the subject. But there is one point

which was touched on by the honourable the Commissioner of Lands; that point was put very clearly, Sir, by one of your predecessors, Sir Everard im Thurn, in the Governor's Message on the 14th May, 1908. Speaking on the subject of waste land owned by Europeans, he said:—

I will also add, that in my opinion, it is not only this so-called native land, but also much now unused European-owned land, that should, in one way or another be made available. As nearly as I have yet been able to ascertain, some 393,000 acres are owned by Europeans, of which only some 139,200 acres appear to be utilised, even for grazing—whilst 254,000 acres appear to be totally unused.

I should like to see this motion broadened on the lines indicated, and with that object I ask the mover and seconder to agree to the deletion of one word, that is the word "native." That would so broaden the scope of the motion as to make it refer to all the lands of the Colony. I think, Sir, we should not be deterred from this by any false idea as to the sanctity of private property. Admitted that the natives are the owners of the unalienated lands of the Colony, we have no more right to insist that they should deal with their estates in a reasonable manner than we have to make the same demand on the European owners. The estimated area of the land owned by Europeans was 393,000 acres. In point of value it is larger than the actual figures indicate because when Europeans were buying land 40 or 50 years ago they did not select the worst portion of the land, and if you travel through the Colony you will see that a good deal of the best land is owned by Europeans, and a good deal of it is still uncultivated. In this Council I have referred several times to one of the most glaring instances—the Dreketi River—where on both banks the land is owned by Europeans for many miles from the mouth and most of it uncultivated. I can speak quite dispassionately on this subject because I am interested in one or two blocks of land in the neighbourhood of the Dreketi which should be subject to land tax, but are not. If you go up the Rewa River it is the same thing, except that a large proportion of the land is used on the Rewa, but a few miles up the river you will find land which has been lying idle ever since it was acquired from the natives. The owner has been waiting and meantime the money expended on other land by other people has improved the value of this vacant land, and the owner can now demand and receive a very high rental. After holding on to the land for 20 years, without paying any tax or doing anything towards the development of the district, the owner is able to get from 25s. to 30s. per acre per annum, for uncultivated land. I think, Sir, that if men are going to hold large blocks of land uncultivated, if they are going to wait for the unearned increment they should pay something

towards the cost of constructing the roads, bridges and other improvements of the Colony, which work is adding value to their land. We must remember that the owner of a freehold is in a different position from the owner of a watch; real estate has always been distinguished from personalty. The whole wealth of a country is in its land and what we call the owner of the land should be treated only as a life tenant holding his estate in trust for the people. A man may do what he pleases with his personal property so long as he does not use it in such a way as to injure other people, but the owner of land should not be allowed to hinder development by holding his land vacant and unimproved. This principle should apply particularly to a country like this where there are many thousands of acres suitable for cultivation which are not carrying any population and which should be made available on such terms as will encourage people to settle on the land. The most useful settler in the Colony is the man who is cultivating land and adding to the wealth of the community by producing crops. The most useless man in the country is the landowner who is holding lands and withholding them from cultivation; he is the man who should be taxed and forced to contribute something towards the development of the Colony. The natives are retarding progress by holding large areas of uncultivated land, and therefore I support the motion that a committee should be appointed to report on the best means of throwing these lands open for settlement. But I want that committee to consider also the question of the 250,000 acres of uncultivated land owned by Europeans and ascertain whether this land also can be thrown open for settlement. We have been given one instance where native owners refused to accept a reasonable rental for a large block of land for sugar growing. By this action the natives have blocked settlement, and to some extent retarded the progress of the Colony, and I think the mover made excellent use of this instance to establish the fact that we are suffering from "economic pressure." I will refer to another instance, with which all elected members are familiar, in which European owners blocked settlement and retarded progress. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company desired to extend their operations in a new district, but were unable to come to terms with the owners of some large areas of freehold land, consequently the scheme fell through and the land instead of adding to the wealth of the Colony remains waste and unproductive. I think, Sir, the owner of that land at that time would have been more open to argument, would have listened more willingly to reason, if every year he had had to pay out a

substantial amount for the privilege of owning uncultivated land and withholding it from settlement. Let the owner of unused land pay something to the revenue of the Colony, and he will balance on the one hand the rent he is offered and on the other the taxes he has to pay. I am trying to persuade the mover and seconder to widen the scope of this committee; do not confine it only to native lands; remember those 250,000 acres which have been acquired and are lying idle; give the committee authority to report on that question also. I will support the motion, Sir, because I have confidence in the committee which it is proposed to appoint. The mover has demonstrated that he has given serious thought to the subject and the seconder has been for many years a recognised authority on the native land question. These two gentlemen and the two official members of the committee have the confidence of the elected members, and, I believe, the confidence of the whole Council. If this motion be carried I think we have a better chance of having some reasonable proposition brought forward than we have ever had before. I will support the motion as it stands, but I hope the mover will amend it as I have suggested. The mover appealed to the honourable Native members to support the motion, but I am sure that the natives will have more confidence in our good faith if we include the whole land question within the scope of the committee's investigations. It is important that the unoccupied native lands should be dealt with; it is almost equally necessary to deal with unoccupied alienated lands. Different methods of treatment may be necessary—for the one, the bludgeon; for the other, the rapier. It may be necessary to take over the control and administration of native lands, whilst for the European owners a gentle application of a tax on unimproved values may be sufficient, but both subjects should be dealt with so that the progress of the Colony may not be obstructed by the withholding of land from settlement and cultivation.

MR. THOMAS.—It is not my intention to address the Council with regard to the land question, because that has been done most ably by my colleagues. I must compliment the mover on the clear and forceful manner in which he put his case before the Council yesterday. But there is one thing I consider should be done and that is to appoint a special committee to consider this most important land question, and the sooner it is done the better. I myself have had experiences and difficulties with regard to obtaining a lease of land from the natives. I had one very glaring

instance of it. Although I had the support and the sympathy of Your Excellency and of the honourable the Native Commissioner, still I was unable to obtain the lease of land that I desired simply because the native owner said "No." Since the Lands Commission has inquired into the ownership of lands in my district it has been proved that the man with whom I negotiated is not the owner of that land. Still, he was in a position at the time to prevent me from obtaining what I desired. I wished to build a dwelling for my family and myself, but I could not do so simply because he said "No, you shall not have the land." I think that the appointment of a committee to investigate and report and devise some scheme to overcome the difficulty would be in the best interest and progress of this country. Therefore the motion before the House has my entire support.

RATU MADRAIWIWI.—I have heard the speeches on the land question. As regards native lands, the first thing I would like to know is where these lands suitable for settlement are situated. I was present at the negotiations of the Wainibokasi. I wish to say that the falling through of these negotiations was not in the first place through the action of the natives. A messenger came from some European in Suva advising the natives there not to give their land. He said the price was insufficient, the rent was too low. These gentlemen who sent the messenger urged the natives to collect money for them, and said that they would stand up for their rights and interests. This refers to land at Wainibokasi about which so much has been said as to the natives having not approved of the leasing of the land. I have been stationed at Ba where there is a large amount of land leased, and where applications had been refused upon the advice of certain Europeans, who urged the natives not to give consent to the lease. With reference to the land at Wainibokasi at the present moment there is comparatively little not under lease, there is only a portion called Vucilevu not under lease. As regards the coastal land at Tailevu province, these are not suitable for agricultural purposes on a large scale. The same applies to land lying waste in the district of Tai. The land in Namalala district, as His Excellency knows, is held by the Government. There is no more land in Sawakasa where the same conditions apply. I know also in the province of Ra the only good piece of land in that province is at present held by the Government, and the balance is only suitable for grazing purposes.

RATU RABICI.—I agree with the honourable members with what they

have said on the subject of the lands so far as native land is concerned. We Fijians have nothing further to do, we have already put it in the hands of the Government for leasing. The proposals were not carried out and at the present moment matters have been placed in our hands again. Applications have been made to us through the Government, but at the same time the application is referred back to us—the native owners—for their consideration. If the proposals explained by the honourable members should be given effect to, it will be satisfactory to us Fijians. I think that the land should be opened up for settlement. As regards a considerable amount of land in my own province, I frequently urged that it should be opened up for settlement, but the Government replied that native owners should be consulted first.

MR. KENNEDY.—I would like to make a few remarks in answer to what the honourable Ratu Madraiwiwi has said. In reference to land at Ba I have a very good knowledge of the natives there and the opinion that I have formed is that the natives are not capable to manage their own affairs. In any leasing of land when one European applies for a lease I have no doubt that other Europeans try to induce the natives not to lease their land to them. There is not the slightest doubt that in these cases there is some ulterior motive. In those cases, probably two or three or more people would be after the same land. When they make an application to the native council the first thing that they would do is to go to the buli and offer him a five-pound note, and perhaps a one-pound note to the owner. The other European would hear about it and he would go to the buli and say: "I will give you £7." This in many cases has been done. That only shows that the natives are not capable to manage their own land. There are lands on the Ba River to my knowledge which were worth £2 an acre—fifty up to one hundred acres of the very best land on the Ba River. They have absolutely been neglected in the last few years, and now they are covered with noxious weeds. I would not give two and sixpence an acre for it now. There is no reason whatever that I can find for this, and there the land remains idle at the present moment. I would like to support the motion before the House, and, more so, I would like to agree with the honourable member for the Eastern Division that the committee should also refer to European lands.

MR. DUNCAN.—The motion before the House has my entire support as it stands, although I should like to say that all the lands in the Colony should be investigated. It is nonsense to say that there are not very large areas

of land lying idle. Various attempts have been made during the last twenty years, and various bills have been brought before this House to remedy this evil, but instead of mending matters, they have merely become worse. I think the Government should accept the motion before the House and possibly something better and definite may be done in order to bring under cultivation the waste lands in this Colony. If the honourable member for Levuka will put the amendment before the House, I would like to second it.

MR. HEDSTROM.—Your Excellency, will you permit me to propose the amendment as suggested?

HIS EXCELLENCY.—Yes, you can put the amendment without making another speech.

MR. HEDSTROM.—I move as an amendment that the word "native" be deleted from the 4th line of the motion as it now stands in the Business Paper.

MR. DUNCAN.—I second the motion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.—Sir, if I may be permitted to do so, I would like to join in supporting the honourable member for the Eastern Division in congratulating the mover of the motion for the manner in which he has put it before the Council. I happen to know, Sir, that the honourable and learned member feels very strongly on this question. He has had a good deal to do with it, officially as well as unofficially, and I think he may be congratulated, Sir, for the very moderate way in which he has placed it before the Council. The honourable member is gradually gaining a reputation of a prophet with regard to many matters which he brings forward year after year for consideration and acceptance. More than one important question advocated by him in the past has been justified by subsequent events and has been in the end approved. I would like to congratulate the honourable member for the Eastern Division for the broad manner in which he supported the motion and for having touched the right note regarding the land tax question, viz., the imposition of a general land tax. That question has been considered by this Council more than once. The Governor is of opinion that the time is not yet ripe for the Government to consider that question seriously, viz., the taxation of land generally. The object of the honourable and learned member's motion is to obtain some finality regarding the land question, and to that end proposes that a Commission or a committee be appointed to report on the best policy to be adopted for opening up for settlement the native lands of the Colony. The honourable member knows and accepts the policy which

has been consistently maintained and publicly declared by His Majesty's Government during the last twenty years or more, viz., that all native lands or all land in the Colony which had not been expressly alienated at the time of the cession of these islands to the Crown are deemed to be vested in the natives. * Therefore I submit that having accepted finality on that part of the question, I hope, Sir, before I take my seat to be able to persuade the honourable member and possibly other honourable members of this Council that the present time is not an opportune one for moving in the direction proposed by the motion. There could be only two methods for obtaining the control by the Crown of the native lands in the Colony without the direct approval of the natives who claim to be the rightful and hereditary owners thereof. One would be by the enactment of an Ordinance by this Council, and the other would be by the making of an order in Council by His Majesty the King. Even if the great Council of Chiefs were to support such legislation, whether by ordinance or by an Order in Council, I submit, Sir, that their attitude would only be a movement in support of such action. Strictly speaking, no legislation should be passed, as the honourable member himself has said, unless the operation of economic pressure had become so very acute that there existed a bona fide deadlock, and such legislation could not be passed at the present juncture without the consent of the owners of the native lands who are many besides the chiefs. The Government, Sir, during the last seven years has not been idle on this question. There has been a very large amount of work done, connected with which voluminous correspondence has passed between the Governors for the time being and the Secretary of State. Bills have been drafted in an endeavour to improve the situation, but all the proposed measures in that direction have been abandoned by the Government because it is not satisfied that we are faced with economic pressure that would warrant any very drastic step at the present time. There are, at the present date, large tracts of native lands which are available to be alienated on leasehold. Your Excellency, in Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State, has recently made regulations under section 8 of Ordinance IV of 1905, prescribing the conditions under which the leasing of native lands shall be approved by the Governor in Council in the future. I may state that these regulations apply also to Crown lands *mutatis mutandis*. It is unfortunate that these regulations have not been published, but the omission will give the honourable elected members the opportunity to tilt at the regulations, and also at the

Government's policy in the matter at a later date. This is an opportune moment to refer shortly to the underlying principles of the regulations. The first is an endeavour to avoid, in the future, all direct negotiations between non-native applicants and native owners. The honourable member for the Northern Division and the native members who addressed the Council on the subject to-day have, I think, supplied ample reasons why this principle should be aimed at in the regulations. This object will, it is hoped, be attained by requiring that before land can be leased it must be handed over to the Governor in Council by resolution passed in district council by natives claiming to be the rightful owners of the land the subject of the resolution. Resolutions to this effect have already been adopted, and certain lands have been thus handed over. I should like to say with regard to the remarks of the honourable native member, Ratu Rabici, that the reason why applications for certain leases had been referred to the natives although the land in question was covered by such resolutions was that such resolutions had not been given the force of law. The next point is that the Government has decided under these regulations that in future the natives are not to be allowed to reserve land which they wish to deal with as they may deem fit, except land which may be required for themselves for planting areas. No land at all will be leased unless it has been handed over by resolution of district council to the Governor in Council to be dealt with by the Governor in Council as he may think proper. The natives will also by the regulations be invited to hand over land already leased for disposal by the Governor in Council, and Your Excellency has under consideration proposals for recommending to the Secretary of State the amendment of the law of the Colony to permit the Governor in Council to deal with any application for the renewal of a lease in cases in which the native owners have refused to renew the lease for reasons which the Governor in Council considers unreasonable and improper. Some advance may be made in those directions. The next principle is that all land above a certain area, viz., twenty acres, is to be disposed of by public auction. The rules which have been in force for some time limit, to a certain extent, the area of land to be leased to East Indians. Twenty acres may be leased to East Indians after investigation without public auction. Applications for larger areas are considered on their merits. That has been done to avoid delay, and to facilitate the desired colonisation of Fiji by East Indians. The principle of dealing with applications by means of public auction is one that

the Secretary of State considers necessary. The Governor in Council being the trustee of the natives in the matter of their lands, it is desired that negotiations should be conducted with the fullest publicity possible. Those are shortly the main principles, in the regulations. The natives will be well advised to accept the decision of His Majesty's Government in this matter. It is proposed that the natives will be approached by the District Commissioners and Rokos to hand over their lands at once under the regulations. The District Commissioners, Provincial Commissioners and Rokos have also been instructed to collect information, as far as possible, as regards areas of land available for settlement, and to obtain advice from persons competent to judge the value of these blocks of land. Any question that may arise as to the value of the land will be referred to an unofficial or official arbiter. For the reason stated I am to say that Your Excellency is unable to accept the honourable member's motion or the amendment proposed by the honourable member for the Eastern Division. The Government's view is that these regulations and the policy referred to should be given a fair trial. It is possible that the policy may lead to a deadlock, the Natives refusing to hand the land over to be leased. If such a condition arises, then the elected members of this Council will be in a position to come to the Government and say that strong economic pressure exists, and that it is desirable that some further or more drastic action should be taken. I hope, Sir, that the natives of this Colony, after having been made to understand the position, will support the Government and the Legislative Council. The regulations will not come into force until the 1st of January, 1916. The interval will afford the opportunity of explaining to the natives the object and intention of the regulations, and I hope that, as stated by the honourable Native member, Ratu Rabici, the natives will fully support the Government, thus avoiding any drastic steps being taken to force, by legislation, the handing over of their land to be controlled by the Government, which object I hope, Sir, may be attained by the legitimate methods that are proposed in the regulations, viz., that the natives will hand over their lands voluntarily. Your Excellency, I understand, is prepared to transmit to the Secretary of State a copy of this very important debate, but Your Excellency is not prepared to accept the honourable member's motion nor the amendment proposed thereto. I hope, Sir, that the honourable elected members will now realise that it is not an opportune moment for the appointment of the suggested Commission.

MR. SCOTT.—I rise, in reply, first of all, Sir, to thank honourable members for the personal references of the kind and laudatory remarks they have spoken of me in the attempt I have made to bring this important question before the House. I am fully conscious of their kindness. There is another personal matter to which I should like to refer and it is this: The honourable the Commissioner of Lands referred to my position as a trustee of an estate controlling land. I did not make any such reference in addressing this House in chief. I regret he has done so, because he knows, or should know, that a trustee and executor is bound by the terms of the will under which he is appointed. If a trustee is unable to come to a satisfactory conclusion in dealing with lands it may be no fault of his. With that remark I will now pass on to the references which have been made in regard to the motion. I would first of all like to deal with the remarks that were made by the senior elected member, which induced him to move an amendment for the deletion of the word "native" in the motion so that the whole of the lands in the Colony may be considered. I am in agreement with the honourable member, as I have already indicated in this House on several previous occasions, in that a land tax on unimproved estates is desirable, but having taken up the attitude that the Government should act in the position of trustees for the native estate, it would not be logical for me to agree to an amendment such as is proposed or for me to say that I agree that the same principle should be applied to lands that have already been alienated. It would not be logical for me to do so as the alienated lands are not managed in the same manner as the native estate, and moreover the proportion of alienated land to native land is very small. The ultimate object of the mover of the amendment is the same as my own, no doubt. I therefore hope that the honourable members on this side of the house will understand the reason why I cannot accept it. Some perhaps will accept the motion but would prefer the amendment, but when it comes to a vote I venture to think none of them will vote against the motion itself. The honourable the Commissioner of Lands referred to a vast area of land which had been handed over to the Government for the purpose of settlement, and that this area had been handed over some years ago. He indicated that it consisted of some hundred thousand odd acres, and he indicated that as an argument that the Government were doing all in their power to facilitate settlement, and that the time was not ripe for the Government to step in and take charge of the native lands. I am making no attack

upon the Government of this Colony nor upon any particular department, but I am drawing public attention to the unsatisfactory position of the native lands inasmuch as existing conditions are retarding development. I accept the honourable member's statement that the Government have these many thousands of acres ready for settlement, but as to the quality of the land I wish to refer this House to an address made by His Excellency the Governor to the Bose Vakaturaga in May, 1914, where he made a statement which appears in the following paragraph:—

You are aware that various District Councils were asked to pass resolutions handing over to the Government control of lands already leased and lands unused by native owners. Resolutions have been passed handing over control of lands leased, but only up to date of the passing of the resolutions. Thus lands leased since those dates have not been handed over. The lists of lands not used by natives and not leased which have been sent in to the Government show that it is only in districts in which settlement is not likely to take place for many years that lands have been handed over. Even in regard to those lands conditions have been attached—

By whom? The natives, apparently.

which make it almost impossible to lease them, even if applicants were forthcoming. In districts in which lands are required for settlement and can be leased readily, no land practically has been handed over. The results of the efforts made to give effect to your resolution of 1911 are disappointing, and the present position is much the same as it was in 1903.

That paragraph from the Governor's speech is the answer to the statement that lands have been handed over. The simple reason is that those lands are practically useless. While I am on the subject of the lands that have been handed over voluntarily I would like to make one or two further remarks. Ratu Rabici, who is a chief of this Colony, participated in the resolutions of the Bose Vakaturaga agreeing to hand over to the Government certain of the native lands—but let me tell him and other natives that as the law is to-day the native has to be consulted and that is why all applications even since the resolutions were passed have been submitted to the District Councils for their consent. I have merely mentioned that point to show and emphasise the fact that what I said yesterday, that the land that has been handed over voluntarily is in effect of no value and the effect of the resolutions is nil. I would like again to refer you to what I read yesterday on page 262 of the Indian Commissioner's report regarding the statement made by the honourable the Colonial Secretary, that one of the underlying principles attached to these proposed regulations being that lands would not be leased unless through the Government—that is to say that lands that were not handed over would not be approved for lease by the Executive Council. If we are to take our experiences up to May, 1914, as any guide as to the class of

land that is going to be handed over under the new regulations (and I presume that experience is the best guide as to what is going to happen in the future) then the proposed regulations will carry us no further. We have no reason to believe that any better lands will be handed over voluntarily to the Government in the future than in the past. The proposed regulation quoted by the Colonial Secretary would be practically useless, and I venture to think we all agree with His Excellency's description of the land already handed over. Without desiring to weary the Council, I wish to quote a few words again from the Indian Commissioners' report. On page 262 they say:

Recently, however, the needless difficulty and expense of the present procedure was recognised, and at the time of our visit revised regulations dealing with the grant of lands awaited only the sanction and approval of the Secretary of State. The needs of Indian settlers were considered, but existing customs regarding leases seem to have been given undue weight. The most important change is that negotiations for leases will be made solely through Government officials, and no land will be leased unless the native owners first hand it over to Government. This is a very great improvement, as negotiations were often tedious and costly, tenures were insecure, and in some cases rents were unreasonably high.

I share the hope with the Indian Commissioners that it is going to be an improvement, but I believe in my own mind that it will not be. Now, in the same report the Commissioner of Lands gave to the Indian Commissioners as indicated at page 261 the method adopted governing applications for land, and since I have heard the honourable member's speech this morning, I have almost come to think that it is quite easy for Indians to acquire land. Practical results, however, show us how difficult it is for anyone to lease native land. The Commissioner of Lands clearly shows that by his memorandum to the Indian Commissioners, and supports the very statement that I made yesterday with regard to the circuitous route prevailing. Certainly these lands that have been acquired is a step in the right direction, but the acquiring of very small portions is not sufficient for the demands of the Indians. I may perhaps be permitted to refer to the fifty, sixty, or more leases that go before the Executive Council every month for approval, applied for by Indians under the present circuitous route.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.—That is to be abolished.

MR. SCOTT.—That will be abolished, as the Colonial Secretary says. What is going to be the effect of the abolition? I have no hesitation in saying that it will retard every lease because the natives will say:—"You do not own the land, and we will only give you the land which we have passed by resolution." That regulation, I hope, is going to have a good effect, but I am sure, as I have said before, that it will

have a very contrary effect. Does anyone know the number of applications that are refused by the natives and never reach the Executive Council for approval? I hold in my hand an agreement signed by a native to cultivate and give to a non-native a tenure of land for ten years. He induces that non-native to spend £160 on that land and then he leased the land to someone else altogether. I admit in law that the non-native had no right to go to that native and deal with him, but seeing that the non-native was one of the Indian immigrants is it a wonder that he was taken in like that? It is cases like this, however, that I want to obviate by asking the Government to take control of these lands. Your Excellency, these are instances that I am quoting here seriously to-day as supporting my resolution to place some one else in the position as a controlling factor of that land. I am unable to accept the honourable member's amendment. I will turn now, Sir, to the remarks made by the honourable Native members. I was very glad to hear Your Excellency invite their opinion, but it was rather amusing to hear Ratu Joni quote cases of what he termed "some Europeans" who induced native owners—who apparently were willing to lease—not to do so for reasons best known to themselves. What better argument can I have? If the Government controlled that land—that is the Wainibokasi land—the Government would not have allowed Europeans to approach them. The Government would have decided for themselves without the interference and influence referred to by Ratu Joni. Ratu Rabici came forward and said at once that he supported my motion in the interests of the natives. If the natives' view is worth anything at all then I take it that must carry weight with Your Excellency and this Council. I know I am speaking against an official vote, but it does not deter me in my efforts to carry the Secretary of State with me, because if I do so I will carry the whole House. If we have an open vote I am certain that seventy-five per cent of the official members would vote for the motion. Your Excellency has said in your Address to this Council that the agricultural pursuits of this Colony are not carried on in the same extensive manner as they should be, and Your Excellency quoted cases in other colonies by analogy. The remarks of Your Excellency were undoubtedly very appropriate. May I say, in reply, however, that if the land were more easily obtained and that if more Indian labour were obtainable the hope and wish that Your Excellency expressed will be consummated. I feel that I have already detained the Council too long in this debate, but unless we have a small committee appointed to inquire

into this question and report to Your Excellency, and then in turn to the Secretary of State upon some system, then we will be in no better position than we have been for years. The state of chaos that reigns to-day will continue, and I feel, Sir, that unless this Colony adopts some definite land policy she will never take her true place in the Pacific.

Amendment put.
Council divided.

Against	14
For	6
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Majority	8

Against.	
Ratu Rabici	Commissioner of Works
Ratu Madraiwiwi	Commissioner of Lands
Mr. Scott	Inspector of Constabulary
Agent-General of Immigration	Chief Medical Officer
Native Commissioner	Receiver-General
Colonial Postmaster	Attorney-General
Superintendent of Agriculture	Colonial Secretary
For.	
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Thomas
„ Duncan	„ Marks
„ Crompton	„ Hedstrom
Amendment negatived.	

HIS EXCELLENCY.—I wish to say with regard to the appointment of a committee as stated in the motion, that the Government can hardly support the motion, having regard to the views expressed by the Secretary of State. But I would be glad to transmit to the Secretary of State, for his consideration, a full copy of the debate. Original motion was then put.
Council divided.

Against	11
For	9
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Majority	2

Against.	
Agent-General of Immigration	Commissioner of Lands
Native Commissioner	Inspector-General of Constabulary
Colonial Postmaster	Chief Medical Officer
Superintendent of Agriculture	Receiver-General
Commissioner of Works	Attorney-General
	Colonial Secretary.
For.	
Ratu Rabici	Mr. Crompton
Ratu Madraiwiwi	„ Thomas
Mr. Kennedy	„ Marks
„ Duncan	„ Scott
	Mr. Hedstrom
Motion negatived.	

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